Opposition closer to final split; Ping files bid today

Story on PAGE A2

website: www.inq7.net

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Monday, December 29, 2003 ★★ 56 pages / 5 sections / vol. 19 / no. 21 P15

No way, GMA says on NPA campaign fee

MASKI ISANG KUSING–WALA!
TARAY NAMAN!

NOT even a centavo.

President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday said she would not pay a "permit-to-campaign" fee being demanded by communist rebels on all candidates in the upcoming elections.

"That is extortion.

NO WAY/ A21

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph

WHAT'S INSIDE

- **Auditor, son killed in blast** ACROSS /A17
- **China steps up SARS alert** WORLD /A11
- **Q4 growth seen at 4.4%** BUSINESS /B1

Prosecutors fear Estrada won't return

STATE prosecutors yesterday vowed to block deposed President Joseph Estrada from leaving for a medical trip to the United States next month, fearing he may not return to face corruption charges.

The prosecutors said they would ask the Sandiganbayan today to reverse its ruling last week granting Estrada a three-month release from detention to seek medical treatment, special prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio said.

"The Sandiganbayan has no jurisdiction in the United States. Once Erap is out of the country, the conditions imposed by the court are nothing because they are no longer covered by US law," Villa-Ignacio said, referring to Estrada's nickname.

The anti-graft court last week granted Estrada's petition to seek surgery for his arthritic knees in California on humanitarian grounds.

It said Estrada may leave as early as January but should return by the end of March to continue his trial for corruption. The 66-year-old former President, ousted in a military-backed popular revolt, stands accused of plundering national coffers of some $80 million.

Estrada has denied the allegations and maintains he was illegally ousted.

PROSECUTORS/ A21

SOLDIERS carry a wounded woman as aid workers from Germany arrive at the airport in Bam City, about 1,000 km southeast of Tehran. The death toll in Iran's earthquake has been placed at 20,000 with more than 30,000 people injured, the Interior Ministry said in a statement on Saturday. AP

Int'l aid pours in for Iranian victims

Foreign rescuers rush to find quake survivors

BAM, Iran—Foreign rescue teams with sniffer dogs joined Iranians in the rush to save anybody still alive Sunday, two days after an earthquake reduced most of this city to rubble and killed thousands of people.

More than 40 foreign planes have landed in Iran bearing aid and rescue workers for the stricken people of Bam. But looting was also reported Sunday as hungry people raided those shops still standing for food.

The scale of the devastation made it difficult to give an accurate death toll, but Iran's interior ministry has estimated 20,000 deaths and officials working in Bam have said it could rise to 40,000.

"More than 10,000 bodies have been pulled out of the rubble," Brig. Gen. Hasan Rastegarpanah of the Revolutionary Guards said Sunday. The elite guards are the largest single organization taking part in the relief operation.

"Out of a total of 7,000 injured, around 2,000 have died," he said.

The city of 80,000 people was asleep when the earthquake of magnitude 6.6, according to the US Geological Survey, struck early Friday morning.

Many countries have flown aid and rescue workers into Iran. The Associated Press saw rescue teams from Austria, Azerbaijan, Britain, Finland, Germany, Russia and Turkey going over the remains of flattened homes Sunday. Several teams had sniffer dogs.

Experts say people buried in the rubble with access to air can normally survive up to 72 hours, but there have been cases of people living longer.

Two US planes landed in Kerman, the local provincial capital, early Sunday, said the spokesperson for the provincial governor's office, Saeed Iranmanesh. The aircraft were carrying food and other aid.

They were the first American planes to land in Iran in more than a decade. The United

INT'L AID/ A21

AN INJURED Iranian boy rides on a bus with his family as they leave the cemetery in Bora to make their way to Bam. AFP

'Zigzag' alters course, spares Southern Leyte

By Joey A. Gabieta
PDI Visayas Bureau
and Norman Bordadora

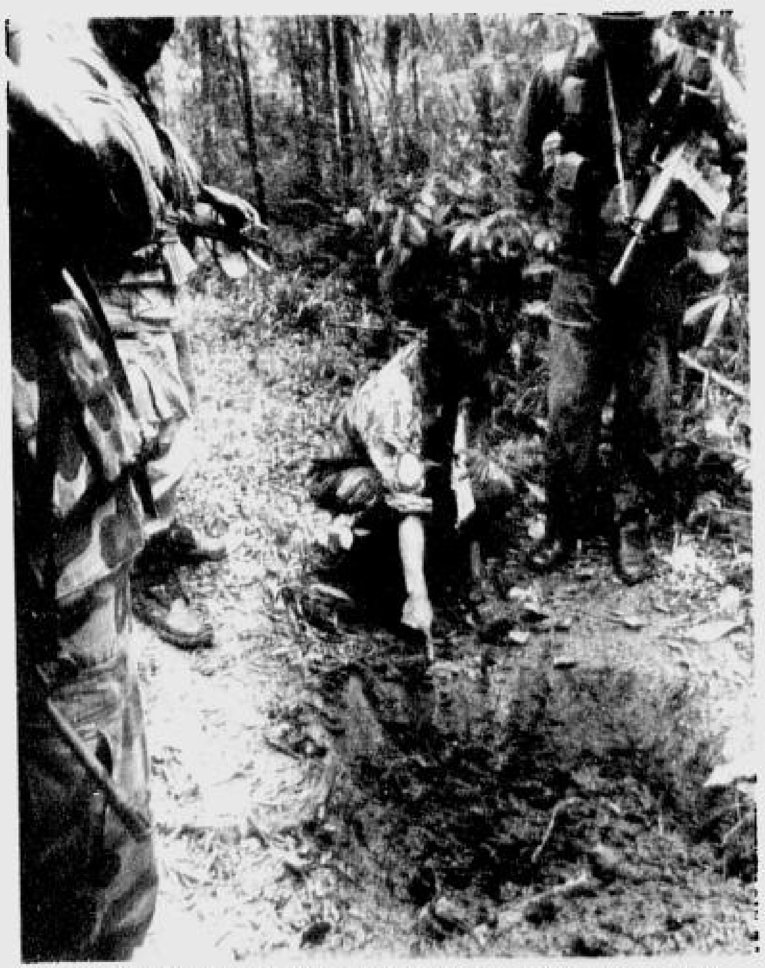
TACLOBAN CITY—Leyteños yesterday heaved a sigh of relief after tropical depression "Zigzag" weakened into a low pressure area and changed course, sparing Southern Leyte that was hit 10 days ago by killer landslides triggered by heavy rains.

As of Sunday morning, Zigzag was heading toward Tagbilaran City in Bohol with sustained winds of 25 km per hour, according to Tacloban weather forecaster Vicente Dadale. With the change of direction, Eastern Visayas is now free from the threats of Zigzag, according to Dadale.

Because the threats had passed, 3,070 passengers stranded Saturday at the ferry terminal in Barangay Looc, Allen, Northern Samar were allowed to cross to Matnog, Sorsogon, en route to Metro Manila yesterday morning. They were on board 270 buses and light vehicles.

ZIGZAG/ A4

Only 7 CPP cadres disciplined for bloody purges



THIS PHOTO, taken on May 13, 1989, shows soldiers digging at a suspected mass grave of CPP purge victims in a village in Cavinti, Laguna.

PDI FILE PHOTO/BOY CABRIDO

By Juan V. Sarmiento Jr.

(Fourth of five parts)

SPECIAL REPORT

SOME former senior cadres of the Communist Party of the Philippines admit accountability for the anti-infiltration campaigns that killed hundreds of its members and supporters in the 1980s.

However, they declined to be identified for legal reasons.

The CPP also acknowledges that certain people still with the party are culpable, but does not name them.

Some of those involved in the purges have died. A number are living abroad.

A former senior united front cadre couches the accountability in philosophical terms.

"I feel a great sense of moral responsibility. *Isang mabigat na kasalanan ko* (It's my big sin)," said the former cadre, who claimed to have "reflected long and deeply" about Operation Missing Link (OPML), the campaign against suspected government spies in Southern Tagalog.

"I don't know if it could be akin to the Christian concept of original sin, though," said the former cadre, who was in Southern Tagalog in 1988.

Like the others, the ex-cadre acknowledged that all party officials involved in the OPML were accountable, but said: "*Mabigat ang responsibility ng namumuno* (The leaders bear a heavy responsibility)."

The former cadre has resolved not to be quiet the next time a similar situation arises: "I won't keep silent because I know it is wrong. I will have to speak up

ONLY/ A20

Victims, kin invoke int'l laws

By Juan V. Sarmiento Jr.

THE MOTHER of a victim of the anti-infiltration campaigns of the Communist Party of the Philippines does not expect to find justice for her son.

"If actress Nida Blanca [who was murdered in 2001] cannot get justice, what more poor people like us? I am old and I will just leave it to God," said Elisea Ignacio, 77.

But not all families of the purge victims feel this way. They are banking on international standards in their quest to hold the perpetrators accountable.

Soliman M. Santos Jr., regional director for Asia of the humanitarian organization Geneva Call, said the purges were yet another argument that human rights created obligations for "non-state actors" like rebel groups.

According to Santos, the notion underlying the anti-infiltration campaigns that "spies have no rights" partly explains the human rights violations that occurred.

"On the contrary," he said, "even wartime spies have rights under international humanitarian law."

The purpose of international humanitarian law is to minimize or prevent harm to and suffering of civilians and other persons not directly taking part in hostilities.

There are practical reasons for using international law standards in pursuing the accountability of armed groups.

Armed groups reject national

VICTIMS/ A20

RP workers' kids form savers' club

By Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

"WE WOULD like the peso to fall," quipped Arlyn Ortizo, a young daughter of an overseas Filipino worker (OFW).

Not that she wished the economy would slide further. "What we want is for the peso coins to continuously fall into our coin banks."

In San Pablo City in Laguna and Mabini town in Batangas, children of OFWs have formed the Batang Atikha Savers Club, their way of showing appreciation for their parents' sacrifices.

Nothing warms the heart of OFWs more than to come home and see the fruits of their efforts put to good use by their families, even in their absence. And their own children leading the way.

Nothing is more devastating than to find out that all that slaving away on foreign land has been all for naught. Some heartbreakers: money wasted for useless luxuries, dismembered families, and children not finishing

RP WORKERS'/ A4

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MONDAY, DECEMBER 29, 2003

Second FrontPage

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Visayas and Mindanao including Palawan will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms becoming widespread rains over Samar provinces. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers mostly over the Eastern Section.

COMPILED BY: ARMIN ADINA, PDI RESEARCH/12/29/03 SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Partly cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly cloudy
Baguio	Partly cloudy	Roxas	Partly cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with rains
Laoag	Partly cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with rains
Clark Zone	Partly cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with rains
Tagaytay	Partly cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with rains
Legazpi	Partly cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with rains
Calapan	Partly cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with rains

Opposition closer to final split

By Christine O. Avendaño

THE OPPOSITION inches closer towards "splitsville" today with Sen. Panfilo Lacson, the first of its two aspirants for the presidency in the May 2004 polls, filing his certificate of candidacy.

"Once we file, *tuloy tuloy na 'yan* (there's no looking back)," Lacson's political adviser Angelito Banayo said in a phone interview.

The Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino is split between Lacson and movie actor Fernando Poe Jr., with party president Sen. Edgardo Angara supporting the movie actor and secretary general Rep. Agapito "Butz" Aquino backing Lacson.

Poe and his running mate are expected to file their COCs between Jan. 1 and 4, according to his spokesperson, Sen. Vicente Sotto III.

Sotto yesterday said their newly formed Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino (KNP), chaired by Angara, would announce its candidates for vice-president and senators this week.

On the other hand, Lacson has yet to choose his running mate and the rest of his lineup, according to Banayo, who is also the spokesperson for the Ping Lacson for President Movement.

"We wanted to talk with FPJ first, but communication lines have been cut off," Banayo said.

Even deposed President Joseph Estrada early this week gave up on bringing Lacson and Poe together in one last attempt to have a single slate for the opposition.

So far, three personalities are being eyed as Lacson's running mate, including Metro Manila Development Authority chair Bayani Fernando. Banayo identified the two others as an opposition senator and a Cabinet official, and said Lacson had talked with one of the three.

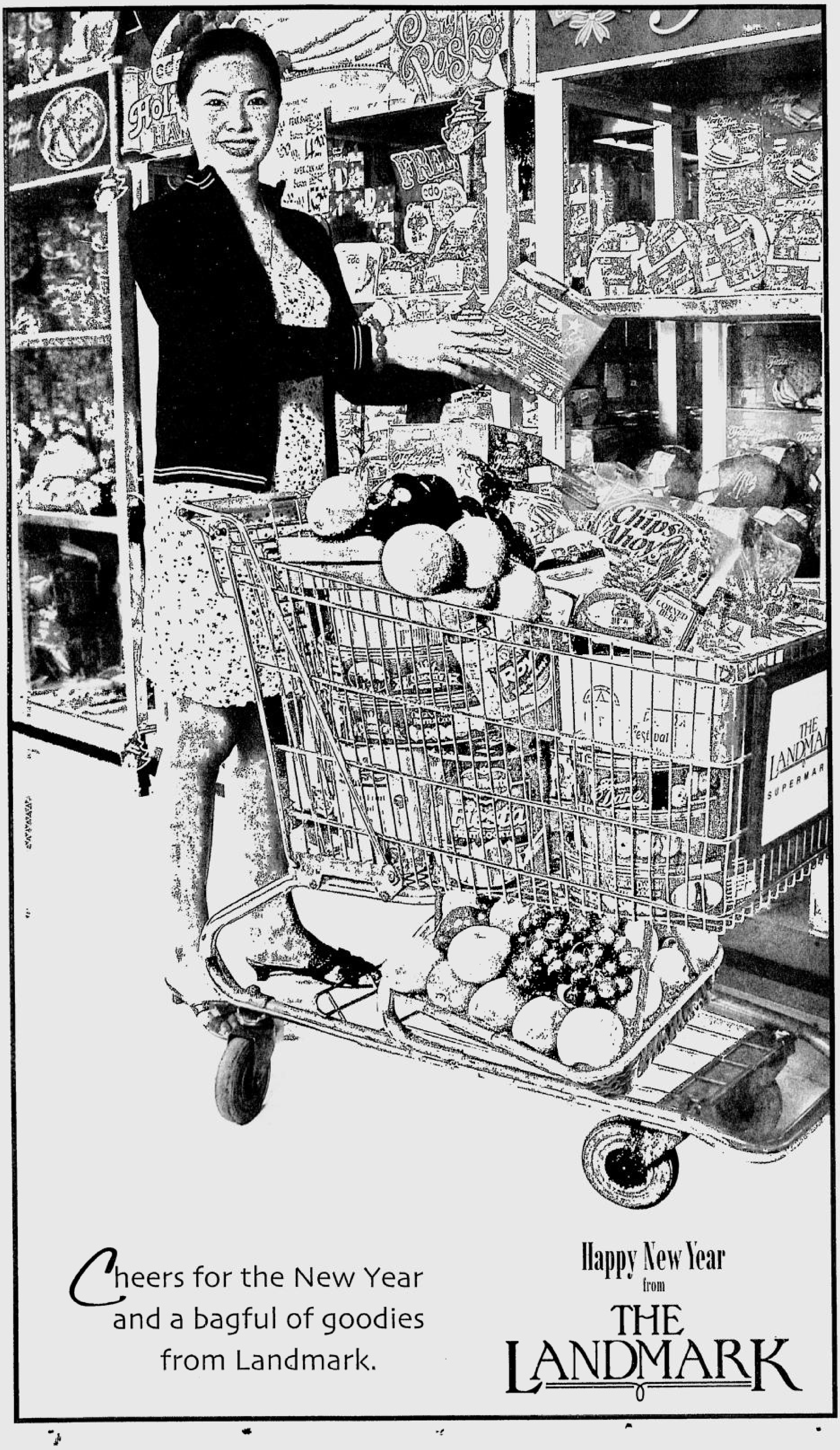
LDP colleagues led by Aquino and Representatives Carlos Padilla, Gilbert Remulla and Rolex Suplico, as well as some 3,000 supporters are set to accompany Lacson to the Comelec offices in Intramuros. They are scheduled to gather as early as 7 a.m. at the nearby Plaza Roma, where the senator will first address them.

Poe's short list for a running mate, according to Sotto, includes Senators Loren Legarda, Aquilino Pimentel and Gregorio Honasan, and former Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago. Sotto said the KNP leadership has likewise submitted to the actor 16 names to consider for the 12 senatorial slots. Poe would have the "final say" on the lineup, Sotto said.

Pimentel admitted that Lacson's candidacy would be "a minus for the united opposition." But, he predicted, only "a small faction would go for him."

Indeed, a statement bearing "the official position of the LDP" was issued yesterday, with party leaders rallying behind Angara and the new coalition.

All but one of 16 regional chairs agreed that, according to the LDP constitution, Angara had "sole authority to sign the certificates of nomination for the party's official candidates, or to designate authorized signatories."



Comelec sees loud, busy day

By Blanche S. Rivera

TOMORROW will be another loud and busy working day for the Commission on Elections.

Two serious presidential aspirants, one escorted by a motorcade of supporters from Bulacan and another by his whole party slate, are set to file their certificates of candidacy.

At around 2 p.m., Eduardo "Brother Eddie" Villanueva, spiritual director of the Jesus is Lord Church Worldwide (JIL) movement, makes his "firm and final decision" to reject President Macapagal-Arroyo's appeal to drop his presidential bid.

Villanueva will be coming from a proclamation rally in Malolos set at 9 a.m., according to Bishop Fred Magbanua, one of the coordinators of Task Force Pagbabago (TFP), which is supporting the JIL leader.

Magbanua said at least 5,000 people—Muslim supporters, vendors from Baclaran, tricycle and jeepney drivers, Bulacan officials, and movie personalities—are expected to join the rally and motorcade.

Former senator and Education secretary Raul Roco is coming in earlier, but without as much fanfare. He will lead his Aksyon Demokratiko bets in a walk to the Comelec from Rizal Park, where they will take an oath of allegiance to the country before the statue of national hero Jose Rizal at 7 a.m.

Roco, who topped most of this year's popularity surveys for presidential aspirants, has revealed that Malacañang sent emissaries to convince him to become Ms Macapagal's running mate.

Villanueva's JIL movement claims a membership of some five million nationwide and abroad. He was asked by House Speaker Jose de Venecia, former president Fidel Ramos, and Ms Macapagal herself to form a coalition with the administration party instead of contesting the presidency.

As much as he loved and respected friends in government, Villanueva said, he could not turn his back on a "call to duty from the nation and the Lord."

But Magbanua said Villanueva's slate has not been finalized and that TFP was awaiting word from prospective candidates who were still in consultation with their own political parties.

Backers step up drive for GMA

By Cynthia D. Balana

WITH dark horse Fernando Poe Jr. now officially in the presidential race, leaders of the House of Representatives yesterday stepped up their campaign for President Macapagal-Arroyo by extolling her leadership qualities.

They urged the people to judge the President fairly and consider that she "inherited" most of the country's problems.

The appeal was made by Assistant Majority Leader Peter Allan Cayetano, and Representatives Prospero Nograles of Davao City, Wilhelmino Sy-Alvarado of Bulacan and Monico Puentevella of Bacolod City. All four are with the ruling Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats.

"The President is the most qualified (for the job)," Cayetano said. "Opposition candidates have nothing to offer but destructive criticism against her government."

Nograles said Filipinos should take no chances because the country's welfare was a serious matter.

Sy-Alvarado batted for continuity, saying, "She should be allowed (to finish) her programs."

Puentevella said he was confident that Filipinos were wise enough to not choose a mediocre candidate.

Four heavyweights of the Nationalist People's Coalition, including Isabela Gov. Faustino Dy, party chair, also declared support for the President. The three others are Gov. Tommy Joson of Nueva Ecija, Gov. Jose Yap of Tarlac and former Rizal Gov. Ito Ynares.

The NPC, the country's second largest political party, has coalesced with Lakas-CMD. But businessman Eduardo Cojuangco Jr., chair emeritus, said members could support whomever they wanted.

GMA heaps praises on El Shaddai leader

By Gil. Cabacungan Jr.

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo joins Brother Mike Velarde and his El Shaddai flock for a Christmas celebration Saturday night.

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday reiterated her call for reconciliation at the annual Christmas gathering of the El Shaddai members where she fawned upon their influential leader, Bro. Mike Velarde.

After telling the El Shaddai flock that she always prayed to the Lord for reconciliation and unity to make the country more progressive and more competitive among developing countries in Asia, the President heaped praise on Velarde for his leadership qualities and business acumen.

In a statement, the President lauded the initiative of Velarde for being "a true public leader and successful real estate developer for providing low-cost housing not only to his members but also to the low-income and middle class workers."

Velarde is a much sought-after endorser in politics considering his strong influence on his flock whose number runs in the millions. The President had already lost a crucial backer in Bro. Eddie Villanueva of the Jesus is Lord Movement who has decided to run in next year's presidential derby after being fed up with politician's empty promises for decades.

In her message, delivered close to midnight Saturday, Ms Macapagal said: "Help me achieve true reconciliation for the sake of our country and the Filipino people. This is what I pray and work for."

Reconciliation has been her rallying cry since she announced her plan to run in next year's presidential elections. She renewed her plea to all political organizations "to help her administration achieve the reconciliation effort."

NPA call to arms hit

By Cynthia D. Balana

THE CHAIR of the House committee on national defense yesterday chided the leadership of the Communist Party of the Philippines for calling for intensified attacks against the government despite peace overtures by authorities.

Rep. Prospero Pichay of Surigao del Sur urged communist rebels on the ground to immediately reject this clamor for more violence and opt for peace instead.

Pichay said the latest call by CPP central committee chair Armando Liwanag, the nom de guerre of self-exiled Jose Ma. Sison, for more attacks showed bad faith on the part of the communist leader who had been talking with the government to find a peaceful settlement of the armed struggle in the country.

He said that while the government was sincere in forging a peace agreement with the communist rebels, those in the leadership hierarchy of the party were not.

Pichay said Liwanag and other members of the communist organization should support the move for an extended ceasefire until after the May elections instead of advocating for an extension of the guerrilla fronts to the majority of towns, especially those in the strategic parts of the country.

"It would also be to the CPP/NPA's interest to support the holding of peaceful and orderly elections in May, considering that numerous party-list representatives who are allied with the left were also expected to seek election," said the congressman.

Assistant Majority Leader Peter Allan Cayetano and Reps. Rodolfo Albano (Isabela), Augusto Syjuco (Iloilo), Prospero Nograles (Davao City), Gerardo Espina (Biliran), and Aurelio Umali (Nueva Ecija) have joined Pichay in supporting a prolonged ceasefire proposal to allow the electorate to choose their candidates without any fear of violence arising from the operations of the armed rebels.

The congressmen also expressed the hope that a prolonged ceasefire would lead to lasting peace with enemies of the state who, they said, also have the "genuine welfare of the people in their mind."

Abu member with ₱1M on his head falls

By Christian V. Esguerra

GOVERNMENT troops arrested a key member of the Abu Sayyaf allegedly involved in the kidnapping of at least 41 people from two resorts in the Philippines and Malaysia during an operation in Zamboanga del Sur over the weekend.

Said Alah Usman (aka Mohammad Said and Kaiser Said) was arrested at around 10:30 a.m. on Saturday.

A Basilan regional trial court had issued an arrest warrant for Said who was allegedly part of the Abu Sayyaf team that seized 21 people, including two Filipinos, at the Sipadan resort in Malaysia in April 2000.

Said, who had a P1 million price tag, was also implicated in the abduction of 20 people, including the Burnham couple, at the Dos Palmas resort in Palawan in May 2001.

From Barangay Recodo in Zamboanga City where he was arrested, the suspect was brought to the headquarters of Task Force Zamboanga for interrogation.

Lt. Col. Jose Kakilala, Army spokersperson, said Said worked directly under Isnilon Totoni Hapilon, the second in command of the bandit group headed by Khadafi Abubakar Janjalani.

Last year, Hapilon was indicted at a United States court for hostage taking.

Federal HARDWARE
BUILDER'S CENTER
CHRISTMAS Sale
December 3 to January 4, 2004

40% OFF CISAL KITCHEN FAUCET (MADE IN ITALY) Before: P1,699.75 now only P995.00
45% OFF FEDERAL D-I-Y TOOLKIT Before: P944.00 now only P519.20
50% OFF EASI CLOTHESPIN BAG Before: P59.00 now only P29.50*
50% OFF STAR TREETOPPER Before: P59.00 now only P29.50
55% OFF 6pcs. TREE TRIM Before: P399.00 now only P179.55
55% OFF TULIP HAMPER Before: P979.70 now only P419.85
60% OFF 3-TIER SHOE RACK Before: P1,259.70 now only P449.90
60% OFF 10 POCKET SHOE ORGANIZER Before: P279.70 now only P99.90
65% OFF EASI MESH CARRY BAG Before: P419.70 now only P146.90*
70% OFF EASI HANGING HAMPER Before: P168.00 now only P50.40*
75% OFF EASI CORNER HAMPER Before: P559.70 now only P139.95*
75% OFF CHRISTMAS WREATH Before: P699.00 now only P174.75

WE'RE OPEN ON DEC. 30 & 31, 2003; CLOSED ON JAN. 1, 2004
*MAKATI Tels. 893-1654 • 893-1690 E. RODRIGUEZ Tel. 732-1906 *CUBAO Tel. 421-9250 *COMMONWEALTH Tel. 428-4844 *TAYTAY Tels. 284-2206 • 665-3442 *CAINTA Tel. 678-1638 * SUCAT Tel. 788-0773 • BACOOR, CAVITE Tel. (046) 870-2598 IMUS, CAVITE Tel. (046) 875-4840 DASMARIÑAS Tel. (046) 416-3743 *MAKILING, CALAMBA Tel. (049) 245-6667 *BIÑAN Tel. (049) 839-2069 SAN PABLO Tel. (049) 562-7361 *BOCAUE Tel. (044) 692-6719 *ANGELES Tel. (045) 888-4186 MABALACAT Tel. (045) 893-3872
*APPROVED BY DTI-NCR
*OPEN MONDAYS THRU SUNDAYS 8:30 AM TO 7:30 PM
OPEN JAN. 1, 2004 STORE HOURS: 12:00 NN TO 8:00 PM
FEDERAL-ALABANG TOWN CENTER 2nd Level, Town Plaza Tel. 807-6508
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 5100, Series of 2003
BUILD MORE FOR LESS

cdo. KARNE NORTEXT cash papremyo
Nag-text sa CDO. Ang reply, ₱10,000!
Congratulations sa daily winners ng ₱10,000 each!
Dec. 15 Ma. VERONICA McCLINTOCK Zamboanga City
Dec. 16 NIEVES MEMIA MARTINEZ Makati City
Dec. 17 MERLY CABRERA Davao City
Dec. 18 SERAFIN MORENO Caloocan City
Dec. 19 GILDA SOMERA Quezon City
Dec. 20 MARIA TERESA DUENAS Cagayan De Oro
Dec. 21 MARESTEL TABOR Tacloban City
All non-winning entries, for the daily draws sent in December 1 to 31, 2003, still qualify for the December monthly draw of P500,000
Text the promo code to 3996 for Smart/Talk'N Text and 2966 for Globe/Touch Mobile subscribers. You may send as much as 2 promo codes per text.
Example: CDO B12345678, CDO C12345678
Sali na! Baka bukas, Ikaw naman!
Promo runs November 3, 2003 until January 31, 2004

Enjoy the convenience of direct photo printing with HP's built-in multi-slot memory card reader.
Simply insert your digital camera's memory card, choose the picture you want, and print! Compatible with most digital cameras, there's no need to boot up your PC or run to a photo shop to have your pictures developed. Capture those memories and print them as soon as you want them. Contact your HP reseller today

HP PHOTOSMART 7260
PhP5,990
HP PhotoREt 4 colour layering technology with 6-ink printing
Up to 4800 optimised dpi colour
Up to 10/9ppm (black/colour)
Multi-slot memory card reader

HP PHOTOSMART 145
PhP9,450
HP PhotoREt 3 colour layering technology
Borderless 4" x 6" portable printer
Up to 4800 optimised dpi colour
Print as fast as 90 seconds
Multi-slot memory card reader

From Nov 14, 2003 to Jan. 15, 2004, buy participating HP all-in-one or HP Photosmart printers and get a free webcam

hp invent

Print photos without a PC. Can your printer do this?
For more information, call (632) 867-3557, or Toll-free 1-800-1331-4488 or email ph.contact@hp.com

‘Zigzag’ alters course, spares Southern Leyte

From page A1

But the weather bureau’s warning of possible landslides and flash floods in other areas remained in effect due to the moderate to heavy rains the low-pressure area was expected to bring to the Visayas.

Active low pressure areas usually don’t call for landslide and flash flood advisories from Pagasa but the expected moderate to heavy rains in the Visayas and the tragedy in Southern Leyte more than a week ago could have made the warning stick.

“[In] the next 24 hours this low pressure area is expected to bring moderate to heavy rains over Bohol, Southern Cebu, Southern Negros, Misamis Oriental, Misamis Occidental, Zamboanga del Norte, Zamboanga del Sur and Basilan,” Pagasa’s weather bulletin issued at 4:30 a.m. yesterday.

“Residents in these provinces, especially in low-lying areas and near mountain slopes are advised to be on alert against possible flash floods and landslides. Coastal waters in these areas will be moderate to rough and still dangerous for small fishing boats,” it said.

Shut down

President Macapagal-Arroyo shut down a disaster command center at the presidential guest house barely 24 hours after she ordered it put up in preparation for Zigzag.

At a briefing, Ms Macapagal said the command center was closed after Zigzag had weakened and passed the critical areas of the Visayas and Mindanao yesterday morning without any incident.

Defense Secretary Eduardo Ermita, chair of the National Disaster Coordinating Council, said that monitoring of Zigzag would continue round the clock at the management center in Camp Aguinaldo and other regions.

The command center, which the President personally took charge of, was established on concerns that Zigzag might trigger more landslides in Southern Leyte and other areas where the soil had been loosened by torrential rains the previous week.

The President, who ordered a mass evacuation of areas in Zigzag’s path on Saturday, mentioned twice that she was at the command center as early as 3 a.m. yesterday to oversee operations tracking Zigzag’s path.

“Because of our preparations, we have avoided any casualties,” the President said.

Mapping

The President cited Bureau of Mines and Geo-Sciences Director Horacio Ramos for using geohazard mapping in identifying the areas that were most vulnerable to landslides (Panaon Island, Sugid, Ormoc City and Maasin City in Leyte, Surigao City and Sison, Mahinon, and Maruitin towns in Mindanao) and flooding (Butuan City, Davao, Leyte and Cagayan de Oro City).

Residents in low-lying and coastal barangays in the towns of San Francisco, San Ricardo and Liloan in Southern Leyte, who were relocated Saturday to safe ground, returned home yesterday.

Barangays Poblacion in Liloan, Punta in San Francisco, and Pin-ut-an in San Ricardo were devastated by landslides on Dec. 19 and 20 following days of continuous rains. The landslides left about 154 persons dead and 37 injured in Southern Leyte, according to the Office of Civil Defense Office in Eastern Visayas.

Adriano Fuego, OCD regional chief, said the landslides also resulted in the destruction of close to P40 million worth of crops and infrastructure.

He said damage to crops, which included rice, banana and coconut, was placed at P13.65 million. Damage to infrastructure, including the road network connecting Liloan and San Francisco, was placed at P24.1 million. *With a report from Gil Cabacungan Jr.*

YOUNG members of the Batang Atikha Savers Club show off their passbooks. PHOTO COURTESY OF ATIKHA INC.

RP workers’ kids form savers’ club

From page A1

school, OFWs coming home as poor as when they left.

“*Wala rin palang kasaysayan* (It meant nothing at all),” is a sad refrain so often heard.

But with value formation and continuous consciousness-raising, the children of OFWs could easily be motivated to do their part to make their parents’ sacrifices abroad worthwhile.

The Batang Atikha Savers Club was formed in August with the guidance of Atikha, a nongovernment organization which provides economic and psychosocial services to OFWs and their families. [“*Mag-atikha*” means to save.]

The club now has 110 members composed of children and young teenagers.

Milk cans

When the children first came up with the savings concept, they asked: “What do we have here in Mabini that we could use as coin banks?” At first, they thought of the native bamboo as *alkansiya*. But then, for the saved coins to be taken out, the bamboo will have to be cracked open. What a waste it would be.

The children thought of something more practical and easily available. One said, “What about tin cans? My mother sells *halo-halo* and she has lots of discarded Alaska milk cans.’”

The children took up the suggestion. Instead of putting the usual slit in the middle of the lid, they wanted the lid opened halfway and folded in a way that the coins could go in and out easily. The coin banks would come in red, yellow and blue, the colors of their Atikha identification cards, with the Atikha Savers logo which the children created themselves.

One very young member said it well on behalf of all 110 members: “We realized that we could do a lot to show our appreciation for our parents’ sacrifices abroad. We have to value our money. We used to be carefree, now we understand the value of discipline and saving. We are lucky that we have found the key to our future success.”

The children keep their savings in the milk cans and later turn them over to junior collectors who deposit the money in the Atikha office. A saver could make a minimum deposit of P20.

Transactions are reflected in the savings passbook. A P500 saving earns 2-percent yearly interest.

Atikha executive director Mai Añonuevo said the children’s savings were pooled so that they could earn higher interest rates. Fifty percent of the pooled savings is invested in the Balikabayani Koop [a savings and credit cooperative for OFWs’ families] and 50 percent is in time deposits.

So far, Añonuevo happily noted, no one has made any withdrawal. “Save *lang sila nang* save.”

Designing the logo

Money was not all that was in the savers’ minds. The children wanted to create a logo that would be meaningful.

One logo showed a child wearing a *salakot* (native hat). Another was that of an airplane dropping coins. Still another showed children and their parents holding hands and forming a circle. The three creations were merged to form the Batang Atikha Savers Club logo.

Said Rosalie Medrano and Cheryl Dalangin: “It is our belief that the realization of this dream also lies in our own little hands.”

Ivy Joy Jusi and Angeline Hernandez wrote a short essay titled “Here in my passbook lies my dream.” They said: “We were happy that we took part in the Sining Atikha (an arts club). We met and made new friends. We were one in the thought that we could be of help to our parents who are working abroad. We could discipline ourselves and save money.

“We were asked to design the (passbook logo). We wanted it to be different and stand out. It was exciting. It was so nice to see everybody involved in the work. Some cut cardboard, others wrote and drew.

“Here in this passbook lies all our ideas. Here in this passbook lies our aspirations and dreams. Together with other children we will make our dreams come true.”

Women’s center

Añonuevo said that Atikha and Balikabayani Koop have tied up with San Pablo’s city government to boost programs for the OFW sector. The local government, through Mayor Florante Aquino and the city council, has offered a 10-room building that would house services for the OFW and the women sector. [Aquino was the district’s congressman when Flor Contemplacion, an OFW, was hanged in Singapore.]

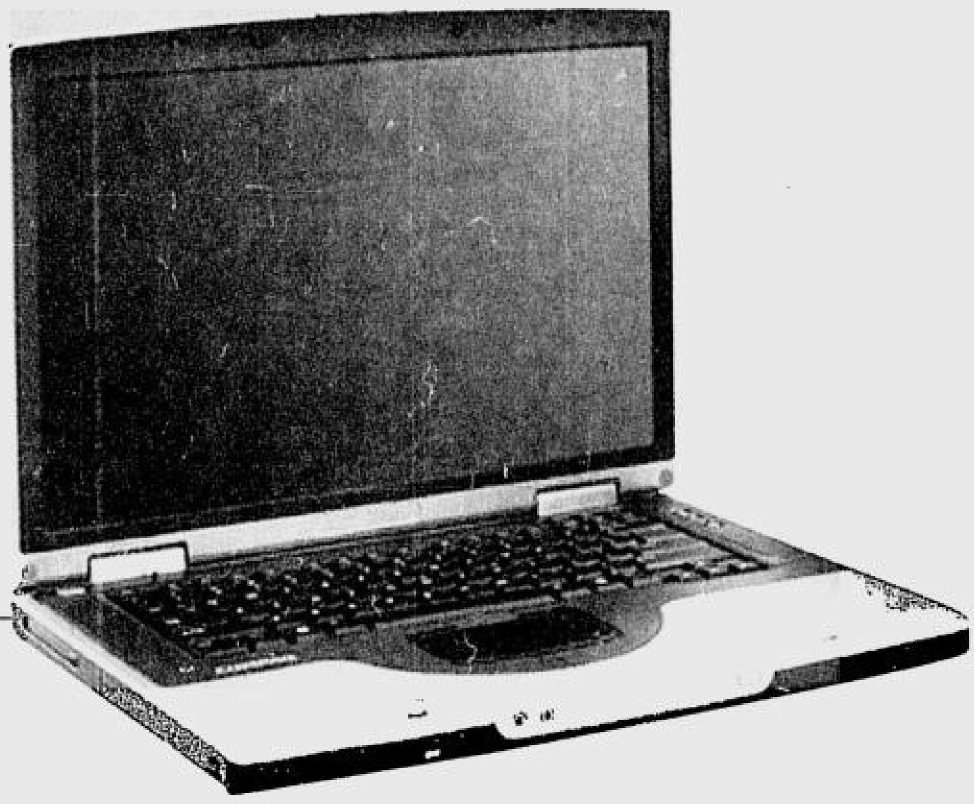
A memorandum of agreement has been signed between the parties concerned. The city council for OFW affairs has also been formed.

Government agencies have pledged services for the center’s operation while the Akbayan party has pledged financial assistance for the center’s completion.

The building will be dedicated to three women who made an enduring impact on the lives of countless OFWs—Kanlungan and Atikha founder Gina Alunan-Melgar, OFWs Rebecca Martinez and Contemplacion. Melgar died early this year, while Martinez died in 1997. Both died of cancer. Contemplacion’s hanging created a national furor.

Their sacrifices have not been in vain.

[illegible]



MOBILE TECHNOLOGY

Compaq Presario X1033
- Intel® Centrino™ mobile technology
  - Intel® Pentium® M processor 1.3GHz
  - Intel® 855PM Chipset
  - Intel® 802.11b Wireless LAN
- Microsoft® Windows® XP Home
- 39.12 cm (15.4") wide-screen display
- 40GB
- DVD-ROM
- 56 kbps modem
- 10/100 LAN
- 256MB

SRP PhP 91,950
NOW ONLY **PhP 86,950**
VAT Inclusive

The Compaq Presario X1033, X1032 and X1022 notebooks are what you need when you want work to get done even when you're on the move. Powered by Intel® Centrino™ mobile technology, you can accomplish a lot of things with these mobile wonders. Access information to respond to a client's question on the spot; collaborate instantly with team members across the globe; update documents on the fly and send revisions to the home office. For more simple operations, you can surf the net, send an email or download videos and MP3 files while having lunch with your friends. And with these notebooks' 15.4" widescreen display, you can view applications side by side without straining your eyes. Add their long battery life and sleek portable dimensions to the mix. these notebooks are perfect for your mobile lifestyle. It's the kind of functionality you expect from your primary workspace. But now you can have it on the go. But what's best is, from December 27, 2003 to January 15, 2004, buy any of these featured notebooks and get P5, 000 off its regular price. So get moving, visit your Compaq Presario dealer today.

Compaq recommends Microsoft® Windows® XP

Compaq Presario X1032
- Intel® Centrino™ mobile technology
  - Intel® Pentium® M processor 1.5GHz
  - Intel® 855PM Chipset
  - Intel® 802.11b Wireless LAN
- Mircosoft® Windows® XP Home
- 39.12 cm (15.4") wide-screen display
- 60GB
- DVD-CD Writer Combo
- 56 kbps modem
- 10/100 LAN
- 256MB

SRP PhP 106,950
NOW ONLY **PhP101,950**
VAT Inclusive

Compaq Presario X1022
- Intel® Centrino™ mobile technology
  - Intel® Pentium® M processor 1.4GHz
  - Intel® 855PM Chipset
  - Intel® 802.11b Wireless LAN
- Mircosoft® Windows® XP Home
- 39.12 cm (15.4") wide-screen display
- 60GB
- DVD-CD Writer Combo
- 56 kbps modem
- 10/100 LAN
- 256MB

SRP PhP 102,950
NOW ONLY **PhP 97,950**
VAT Inclusive

Samsonite notebook carrying case
FREE
SRP PhP1,600

Get up to P5,000 discount and a FREE Samsonite notebook carrying case for every cash purchase of a Compaq Presario X1033 X1032 or X1022 notebook. Promo is from Dec. 27, 2003 to Jan. 15, 2004.

Per DTI Permit No. 5350, Series of 2003.

FOR MORE INFORMATION [illegible]

COMPAQ
invent

PARTICIPATING PRESARIO RESELLERS: ABC Computer Center • Accent Micro • Complink Marketing • Electroworld • PC Live • Silicon Valley • TCA The Computer Authority Villman Computer Systems Inc.

©2003 Hewlett-Packard Development Company, L.P. Intel, Pentium, Intel Inside and the Intel Inside logo, Intel Centrino, and the Intel Centrino logo are trademarks or registered trademarks of Intel Corporation and its subsidiaries in the United States and other countries. Other products mentioned herein may be trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective companies. Microsoft, Windows, and the Windows logo are trademarks or registered trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, December 29, 2003
5th Day After Christmas

1st Reading: 1 Jn 2:3-11
Gospel: Lk 2:22-35

When the day came for the purification according to the law of Moses, they brought the baby up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, as it is written in the law of the Lord: Every firstborn male shall be consecrated to God. And they offered a sacrifice as ordered in the law of the Lord: a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.

There lived in Jerusalem at this time a very upright and devout man named Simeon; the Holy Spirit was in him. He looked forward to the time when the Lord would comfort Israel, and he had been assured by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before seeing the Messiah of the Lord. So he was led into the Temple by the Holy Spirit at the time the parents brought the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law.

Simeon took the child in his arms and blessed God, saying,

"Now, O Lord, you can dismiss
your servant in peace,
for you have fulfilled your word
and my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you display for all the people to see.
Here is the light you will reveal to the nations
and the glory of your people Israel."

His father and mother wondered at what was said about the child. Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother, "See him; he will be for the rise or fall of the multitudes of Israel. He shall stand as a sign of contradiction, while a sword will pierce your own soul. Then the secret thoughts of many may be brought to light."

Commentary

How did Simeon see what he saw? With the eyes of his body, he saw a tiny baby, a few days old, carried by parents so poor that they brought with them the sacrifice of the poor, a pair of turtledoves. In that temple crowded with so many people of all sorts, Joseph, the carpenter from the provinces, his teen-age wife, and their newborn child would hardly have stood out as unique or different. And yet, Simeon takes the child in his arms and proclaims him "light to the Gentiles and glory of Israel!" How did he see what he saw? Could it be that he saw because "he looked forward to Israel's comforting" for so long? Could the longing, the yearning, the expectation over so many years have sharpened in him a sensitivity to the subtle signs of divine presence? Could it be that Pascal was right when he said: "For those who seek, enough signs are given. There is enough light?"

Claretian Publications Inc., 8 Mayumi St., UP Village, Diliman, Quezon City, UP P.O. Box 4, Diliman, 1101 Quezon City; Tel.: 921-3984; Fax: 921-7429; E-mail: cci@claret.org; Websites: http://www.bible.claret.org (Claretian Publications Inc.) & http://missionaries.claret.org (Claretians in the Philippines)

SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

REMEDIAL LAW (EVIDENCE)—When declaration as part of the res gestae—We agree with the trial court that the anti mortem statement of the victim cannot be considered a dying declaration as the same was not made with awareness of his impending death. In People vs Bautista, et al., we held that it is not indispensable that a declarant expires immediately thereafter. It is the belief of an impending death and not the rapid succession of death, in point of fact, that renders the dying declaration admissible. Nonetheless, his declaration is admissible as part of the res gestae. A declaration is deemed part of the res gestae and admissible in evidence as an exception to the hearsay rule when the following requisites concur: (1) the principal act, the res gestae, is a startling occurrence; (2) the statements were made before the declarant had time to contrive or devise; and (3) the statements must concern the occurrence in question and its immediately attending circumstances. All these requisites are present in this case. The principal act, i.e., the stabbing, was a startling occurrence. The declaration was made right after the stabbing while the victim was still under the exciting influence of the startling occurrence, without any prior opportunity to contrive a story implicating the appellant. The declaration concerns the one who stabbed the victim. Thus, the trial court correctly appreciated the testimonies of prosecution witnesses on what the victim told them as part of the res gestae. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Ynares-Santiago, First Division, People vs Dela Cruz, G. R. No. 152176, October 1, 2003]

BY R. B. VERA

Sabaw pa lang, ulam na!
Bili na, friend!
TEAR HERE
NEW
Maggi
BEEF
Sinigang
Complete with Fresh BEEF Taste
Sampalok & Gabi
27g
Strong meat taste
same as 1 BEEF CUBE
MAKES 1 LITER
Serving Suggestion

hp
photo proof sheet
hp psc 2410

Putting negatives against the light to choose the pictures you want is now a thing of the past. With HP's Photo Proof-Sheet technology, you can print thumbnail versions of photos stored in your memory card onto a single page. You can then mark the pictures you want with a pen along with your preferred size and layout and just feed the page back into the printer to start printing. All without a PC. Enjoy the simple and convenient way to share your memories. Contact your HP reseller today.

HP PSC 2410 PHOTOSMART ALL-IN-ONE
PhP19,990
Print, fax, scan, copy
HP PhotoREt 4 colour layering technology
Up to 4800 optimised dpi colour
2.5" LCD screen
Up to 21/14ppm (black/colour)
Multi-slot memory card reader
HP Photo Proof-Sheet technology

HP PSC 1350 ALL-IN-ONE
PhP8,990
Print, scan, copy,
HP PhotoREt 4 colour layering technology
Up to 4800 optimised dpi colour
Up to 17/12ppm (black/colour)
Multi-slot memory card reader
HP Photo Proof-Sheet technology

From Nov 14, 2003 to Jan. 15, 2004, buy participating HP all-in-one or HP Photosmart printers and get a free webcam.

invent

*Multi-slot memory card reader supports SmartMedia™, xD-Picture card, CompactFlash™ I, II, Secure Digital™/ Multimedia card/ Memory Stick™/Memory Stick Pro™
Promo includes HP PSC 2310 all-in-one (SRP PhP 12,990)
©2003 Hewlett-Packard Development Company, L.P.

Shoot what you like, print what you love
Can your printer do this?

For more information call (632) 867 3557
or Toll-Free 1-800-1-3314488 or email ph.contact@hp.com

Naia still on SARS alert

By Alcuin Papa

SECURITY officials of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport assured the public yesterday that they're equipped to detect suspected victims of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) after China reported the other day its first suspected SARS case since July.

Naia assistant general manager for security services Angel Atutubo said that when SARS hit Asia earlier this year, they directed passengers from China, Taiwan and Singapore to pass through Gates 1 to 7 at the arrival area of the NAIA, making it easy to detect suspected victims.

"We have the thermal cameras in place there. All medical personnel have already been on alert. So we will know if anyone is infected," Atutubo said.

He added that the NAIA has not lowered its SARS alert even when the fatal incurable disease subsided in Asia last July.

A 32-year-old man from the southern city of Guangzhou in China was reported to have checked into a hospital last week with a headache and a fever. He was later transferred to a quarantine ward.

Earlier this month, Taiwan officials reported that a 44-year-old scientist working on the virus had become the latest SARS case.

Praise Him! Praise Him! Ever in joyful SONGS!
MAGIC SING VIDEOKE MICROPHONE
PRAISE & WORSHIP EDITION With
Built-in 500 CHRISTIAN SONGS
A wide collection of the greatest songs of praise and worship. This compilation features the music sung by millions, from the Praise Inc., Papuri Singers, Hillsong Australia, Don Moen, Amy Grant, Sandi Patti, ob Fitts, Steve Kuban, Steve Green, Chris Christian, Ron Kenoly, Darlene Zechech, and many more!
☑ It's so easy! Just connect directly to TV
☑ Wireless duet mic & church hymns songs also available
SONGS DULY LICENSED
Available at: pcbs PHILIPPINE CHRISTIAN BOOKSTORES
• MANILA: 878 UN Ave. - 5220691, 5235501 - Anglo Arcade, Taft Ave. - 5220695
• MAKATI: 17 Pasay Road 8446268 • QUEZON CITY: 605 Edsa Cubao - 7251581, 7267677
• ALABANG: G-5 Metropolis Mall - 5682166 • LAS PIÑAS: Manuela 1, Zapote Road - 8713577
• CALOOCAN: Stall 12, Sapphire Bldg., Monumento - 3612368
FOR WHOLESALE INQUIRIES, CALL OR VISIT US:
in-a-jiffy enterprises
www.magicmic.com
E-mail: sales@magicmic.com
G2K CORP Showroom: G/F Richbelt Terraces (left wing) #19 Annapolis St., Greenhills, San Juan, M.M.
SUPPORT THE "2nd GLOBAL FILIPINO NETWORKING CONVENTION" Dec. 15-18 PICC, Manila

HOMEMADE FOODSTUFF
CALL: 410-4521
929-9598 • 928-2765
926-6031 • 926-6029
415-3841 • 410-7228
FREE DELIVERY
FIESTA INTERCONTINENTAL 6 courses for 20 persons P2,525 only
BEEF ROAST SLICES with mashed potato • CHICKEN LASAGNA [1 gal. tray] chunky and cheesy • PORK BARBEQUE [35 - 40 sticks, 1 gal tray] • SEAFOOD MEDLEY [bouillabaise of assorted seafood] crabs, prawns, squid, etc. • CHOP-SUEY [veggies and meat slices] in thick chicken broth • DARK CHOCOLATE CAKE extra-rich chocolate cake frosted with chocolate icing
PULUTAN ESPESYAL 4 courses For 20 persons P1,850 only
PULUTAN GRANDE 5 courses For 20 persons P2,200 only
FIESTA ROYALE 8 courses For 25 persons P3,450 only
FIESTA PILIPINO 6 courses For 20 persons P2,600 only
FIESTA GRANDE 6 courses For 20 persons P2,825 only
FIESTA TROPICANA 6 courses For 20 persons P3,280 only
HOLIDAY SPECIAL 10 courses For 35 persons P6,325 only
BUFFET DELUXE 6 courses For 35 persons P5,675 only
CCME HOMEMADE FOODSTUFF CO. 111 Dr. Lazcano St., Q.C.

Supreme Court of the Philippines
Judicial and Bar Council
Manila

Announcement

The Judicial and Bar Council announces the opening of the position of **ASSOCIATE JUSTICE** of the **SANDIGANBAYAN** which was vacated by Justice Rodolfo G. Palattao, who retired on December 14, 2003.

In case of recommendation, the recommendee shall conform with the recommendation, which recommendation shall be submitted NOT LATER THAN THURSDAY, 15 JANUARY 2004 to the JBC Secretariat.

The applications / recommendations must be addressed, NOT LATER THAN THURSDAY, 15 JANUARY 2004, to:

The Secretariat, Judicial and Bar Council
Second Floor, Centennial Building
Supreme Court, Padre Faura, Manila

22 December 2003.

LDPuno
LUZVIMINDA D. PUNO
Clerk of Court
Ex Officio Secretary

FRIENDS.CAREERS.SUCCESS.

make it happen this Christmas!
A Special Gift for family Members, Friends and You!
PERSONALITY AND EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT.
GROOMING. MODELING. ACTING
The gift that lasts for a lifetime.
Enroll NOW at any level
and get the NEXT LEVEL FREE!
Choose to start classes anytime before February 28, 2004.
Enrollment must be before December 28, 2003.
MAKE IT HAPPEN NOW!
CALL TODAY FOR DETAILS.
892 9511
John Robert Powers
www.johnrobertpowers.com
Casmer Building, 195 Salcedo St., Legaspi Village, Makati
CONVENIENT PARKING NEARBY
OFFER EXTENDED!
SAVE UP TO ₱30,000

WE DELIVER!

Hungry for news that would feed your mind? The Philippine Daily Inquirer delivers straight to your doorstep. Subscribe to the country's #1 newspaper now!
Call: 528-0183 / 528-0186
Fax reply coupon to: 528-02-34 or mail to:
Philippine Daily Inquirer
c/o Circulation Division
Ground Floor, Trinity Building
636 T.M. Kalaw St., Ermita, Manila
I'd like to subscribe to the Philippine Daily Inquirer.
Please have my copy delivered to:
Name ____________
Address ____________
____________ Tel. No. ____________
Signature ____________

LABAN NG DEMOKRATIKONG PILIPINO (LABAN)

Unit A, 10th Floor, Washington Tower, Asiaworld Complex, Aguinaldo Boulevard, Paranaque City, Philippines
Tels.: 879-8698, 879-3046; Cell: (0917) 848-3735; Fax: 879-8698

THE OFFICIAL POSITION OF THE LABAN NG DEMOKRATIKONG PILIPINO (LDP)

We, the leaders and members of the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino (LDP), fully support all the actions taken by our Party Chairman, Senator Edgardo J. Angara to preserve and protect the integrity of the party and unify the opposition under the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino (KNP). We hereby state that:

1. As LDP Chairman, Senator Edgardo J. Angara has the sole authority to sign the Certificates of Nomination for the party's official candidates or to designate authorized signatories. The LDP Constitution states that:

   Art 6a Sec 5. The party chairman shall be the chief executive and shall have the sole authority to represent the party in all external matters, including the signing of documents.

2. As LDP Chairman, Senator Edgardo J. Angara has the power and authority to place Congressman Agapito "Butz" Aquino on "forced indefinite leave" as Secretary-General of LDP to avoid further confusion in the party:

   Article 6. Sec. 5a (5). the Party Chairman has the power "to act on such extraordinary or emergency matters, especially those not envisioned or foreseen...which cannot await the call and holding of a meeting of the National Congress or the National Executive Council, upon consultation, whenever practicable with other Party leaders.

3. Congressman Rolex T. Suplico has been expelled from the LDP by the party's Regional Governing Body of Region 6 (Western Visayas). The decision was signed by five (5) out of six (6) provincial chairmen and the regional chairman, former Congressman Allen Quimpo.

4. **We are fully behind the formation of KNP, and express our unequivocal support to its standard bearer, Mr. Fernando Poe, Jr.**

All the actions of the party chairman and the Region 6 governing body have been ratified and confirmed by

15 out of the 16 regional chairmen, namely: Board Member Edgardo Zaragoza, *Region 1*; Vice-Governor Oscar Pagulayan, *Region 2*; Vice-Governor Ramon Lacbain and Mr. Raul Ople, *Region 3*; Congressman Joaquin "Jun" Chipeco, Jr., *Region 4*; Governor Jesus Pimentel, *Region 5*; Congressman Allen Quimpo, *Region 6*; Congressman Mike Romero, *Region 7*; Congressman Bert Loreto, *Region 8*; Governor Antonio Calingin, *Region 10*; Board Member Carlo Rabat, *Region 11*; Atty. Augustus Velarde, *Region 12*; Governor Valentina Plaza, *CARAGA*; Mr. Acmad Tomawis, *ARMM*; Governor Ildefonso Dulinayan, *CAR*; Congressman Dondon Bagatsing, *NCR*; and

36 out of 40 members of the National Executive Council.

This is the LDP, and we have spoken.

Attested by:

ENRIQUE A. ZALDIVAR
Acting Secretary General

ADVT.

Spies keep most of RP 'jueteng'-free, claims Ebdane

By Christian V. Esguerra

WITH the country now nearly "cleared" of jueteng, the Philippine National Police has moved to maintain this unbelievable situation.

PNP chief Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. has deployed several police units nationwide to spy on field commanders whose jurisdictions might still have intermittent operations of the illegal numbers game.

Deputy Director General Virtus Gil, PNP chief for operations, yesterday said the deployment was Ebdane's way of enforcing his "one-strike" policy against officers who would renege on their responsibilities in the government anti-illegal gambling campaign.

"This is very serious," he told the INQUIRER. "Imagine a regional director getting axed after just one successful raid in his area of responsibility."

The "spy team," composed of Camp Crame officers handpicked by Ebdane for the job, was expected to regularly apprise the PNP chief on the conduct of the anti-gambling drive, including "guerrilla-type" operations where operators move from one place to another to avoid arrest.

As of last Friday, the PNP's renewed campaign had resulted in the arrest of 2,089 small-time operators and the confiscation of cash bets amounting to P675,952 during raids in Metro Manila, Central Luzon, Calabarzon, Western Visayas, and Western and Southern Mindanao.

Curiously, Ebdane had announced in a press conference that all five police district directors in Metro Manila had declared their respective jurisdictions "jueteng-free" after consulting with local religious leaders. Four days after the announcement, Ebdane's men staged a raid in Quezon City.

The raid was another proof that eliminating the decades-old jueteng in the country was much more difficult than it may have appeared in the eyes of Ebdane. Having declared "88 percent" of all provinces and municipalities "jueteng-free," the PNP chief vowed to root out the illegal numbers game by Christmas. He gave no update on the operations on Christmas Day.

Despite the apparent setback, Gil yesterday maintained that eliminating jueteng was still possible "in the coming weeks" especially with Ebdane's latest "one-strike" policy.

"Let's not be quick to judge (the campaign)," he said. "Let's give it a chance and hope that it will succeed."

The formula against jueteng was actually simple, he claimed: "There will be no jueteng as long as police will not allow it."

Citing his experience at the Cordillera region where he was regional director in 2001, Gil claimed his jurisdiction was awarded for having no jueteng operation simply because he refused to yield to pressures coming from big-time operators.

Even if local government officials tolerate jueteng, he said the illegal numbers game would not thrive in an area if police officers reject it.

"There really has to be a connivance between local politicians and policemen," he explained. "It's very difficult for local politicians to exclusively tolerate (jueteng) because policemen will always get in the way."

EBDANE

'Jueteng' dead in GMA's home province, for now

CAMP OLIVAS, Pampanga—Jueteng operations have stopped for three straight days since Dec. 25 in Pampanga, a strong lair of the illicit numbers game in the last 30 years, police reports said.

In the City of San Fernando, 5 km north of this regional police camp, at least three newsstands fronting as bet collection centers sold only the usual reading fares.

Cabos (chief bet collectors) were not seen on their posts on Saturday. Collectors were not seen carrying their standard jueteng paraphernalia like *cotejo* (a chart of previous winning numbers) and *papelitos* (sheets of paper where bets are recorded).

In at least four middle-class villages in the city, collectors stopped gathering bets or announcing the winning pairs of numbers for the three daily draws run by "RR" or "Mario."

"Jueteng operations have really stopped," said Senior Supt. Rodolfo Mendoza, Pampanga police director.

Earlier, Director General Hermogenes Ebdane Jr., Philippine National Police chief, ordered his men to stop jueteng on or before Christmas Day.

Records from the Central Luzon police said 28 people were arrested in what could have been the last raids held in the City of San Fernando and in the towns of Sta. Ana, Minalin, Mexico, Mabalacat and Macabebe.

Mendoza said only "guerrilla-type" operations existed in Pampanga, the home province of President Macapagal-Arroyo, between Dec. 15 and 24.

Like Mendoza, police directors in Aurora, Bataan, Bulacan, Nueva Ecija, Tarlac and Zambales reported that their areas were "jueteng-free."

Chief Supt. Vidal Querol, Central Luzon police director, denied reports that police held a secret covenant with jueteng financiers to suspend the game indefinitely.

As of last March, a report obtained by the INQUIRER showed there were at least 19 financiers in the region. No one has been arrested in the fresh crackdown though.

Senior Supt. Luisito Palmera, Nueva Ecija police director, said jueteng in his province stopped because the "series of raids seriously affected" the operations so the managers and financiers "voluntarily decided" to stop the game.

Sources in the police and among jueteng bet collectors claimed that jueteng operations were merely suspended and its resumption, based on their experiences, was "always at the pleasure of those in political power." *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk, and Gobleth Moulic, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

MAGIC SING Just got BETTER!

NEW! 49 WOWPHILIPPINES picture backgrounds

MAGIC SING PREMIUM

NEW! Record & Playback Function

Available at: ODYSSEY • AUTOMATIC CENTER • ASTROVISION • ABENSON • WESTERN • SOGO HOME & OFFICE CENTER

Look for the PREMIUM BOX!

Magic Sing Premium is exclusively distributed by:

in-a-jiffy enterprises / G2K CORPORATION

SAN JUAN: G/F Richbelt Terraces (Left Wing), # 19 Annapolis St., Greenhills Tel. No.: 722-5527 • 725-3994 • email: g2k@surfshop.net.ph
MANILA: 7th Floor MARC 2000 Tower, Taft Ave. cor. San Andres St. Malate Tel. Nos.: 405-0178 • 405-0186 • email: inajiffy@surfshop.net.ph
MAKATI: G/F, Bldg. 3, Jannov Bldg., 2095 Pasong Tamo Extension Tel. Nos.: 892-8980 • 813-1722

FREE! MIC STAND

Manufactured By: ET ENTERTECH Co. Ltd. (Korea)

OXY-GEN THERAPY SET

Your complete indoor & outdoor first aid kit

WITH OXYGEN REGULATOR, NASAL CANNULA, ADULT MASK, MEDICAL OXYGEN TANK (15 LBS CAP) COMPLETE WITH TROLLEY

MOBILE TYPE

WITH OXYGEN REGULATOR, NASAL CANNULA, MEDICAL OXYGEN TANK (5 LBS CAP) AND 3-IN-1 STROLLER BAG

PORTABLE TYPE

save a LIFE !

Distributed by: medical center trading corporation
Pioneer St., Cor. Shaw Blvd., Pasig City
Tels. 631-1715; 631-9355; 637-9504 Fax (632) 631-7869
E-mail Address: medcen@info.com.ph

Pasig City (02)	Manila City (02)	Cebu City (032)	Davao City (082)	Iloilo City (033)	Lipa City (043)	Pampanga (045)
631-1715	711-8374	254-2367	222-4404	320-1413	757-2051	961-7892

Available in selected mercury drug Stores Nationwide

Filtration made Perfect!

Perfect package at a perfect price. At WaterCare... everything's perfect!

Filter Housings

Filtering Systems

Carbon Filter Cartridges

Specialty Filter Cartridges

Sediment Filter Cartridges

Authorized Distributor of: PENTEK Plymouth Products formerly AMETEK

A Member of:

Proven and Tested:

At Your Service!

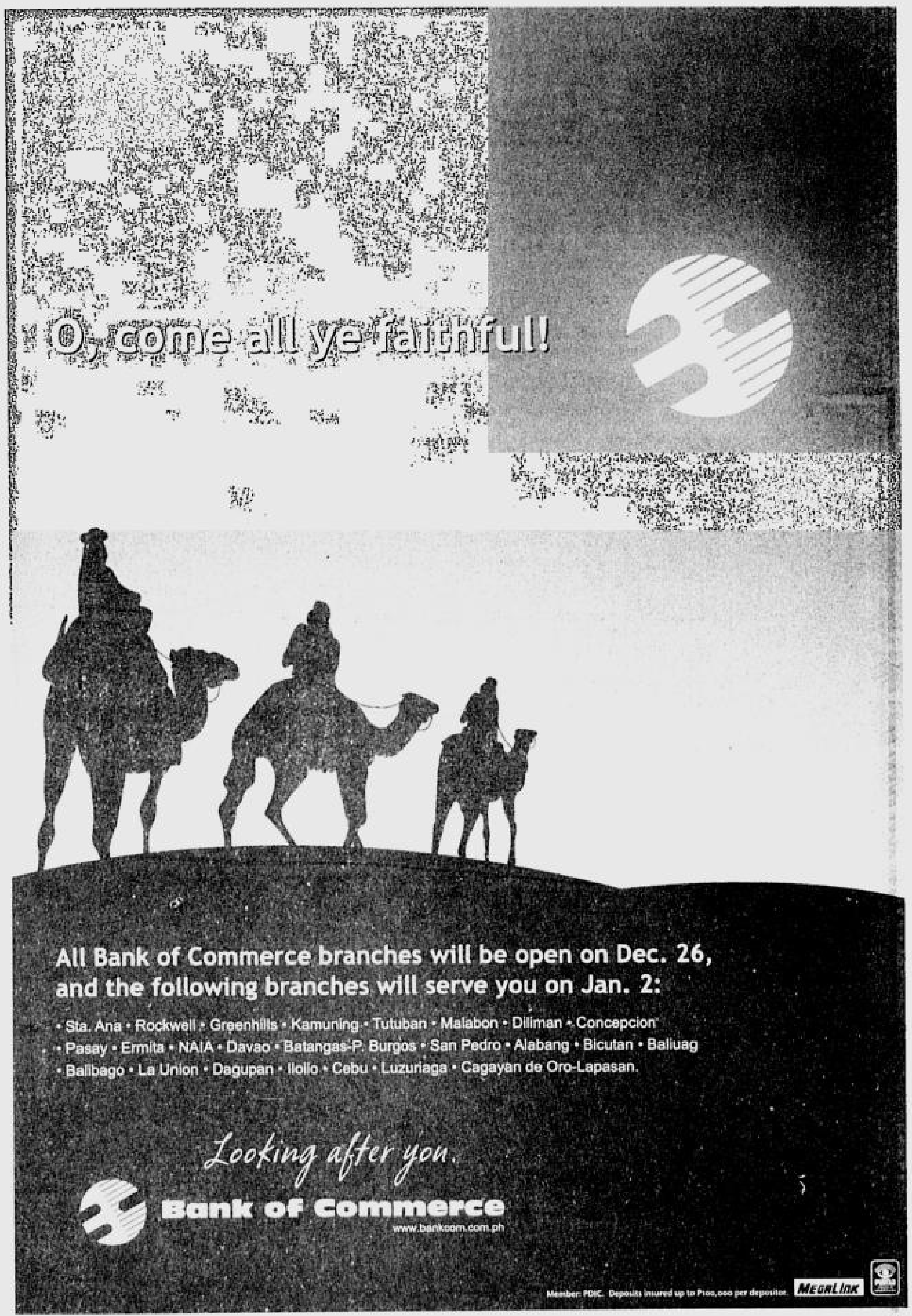
WaterCare Our Name, Your Guarantee!

Inquire Now!

WaterCare Center 3933 L. Roces St. cor. Santol St., Sampaloc, Manila Tel. No. 716-6998 / 716-8078 Fax No. (632) 716-0903 Email: watrcare@ph.inter.net

Also available at: SM Megamall 5/F Bldg. A Tel. #: 633-2510 / 20 • SM City Fairview UGF Tel. #: 4176622 / 4186024 • SM Southmall UGF Tel. #: 806-9393 • SM City Cebu LGF Tel. #: (032) 233-0263 • MC Home Makati Tel. #: 893-3070 loc. 19 • MC Home Ortigas Tel. #: 6365201 • MC Home Fort Bonifacio Tel. #: 815-4270 • Ace Hardware (Nationwide) • Handyman Robinsons (Manila, Galleria & Iloilo) • True Value (Shangri-la, Rockwell) • Hardware Exchange (Sta. Lucia) • Wilcon Builders (Alabang)

Fits USFilters (formerly AMETEK), Cuno, Filterite, Keystone, U.S. Water, Water Resources and most Harmsco vessels

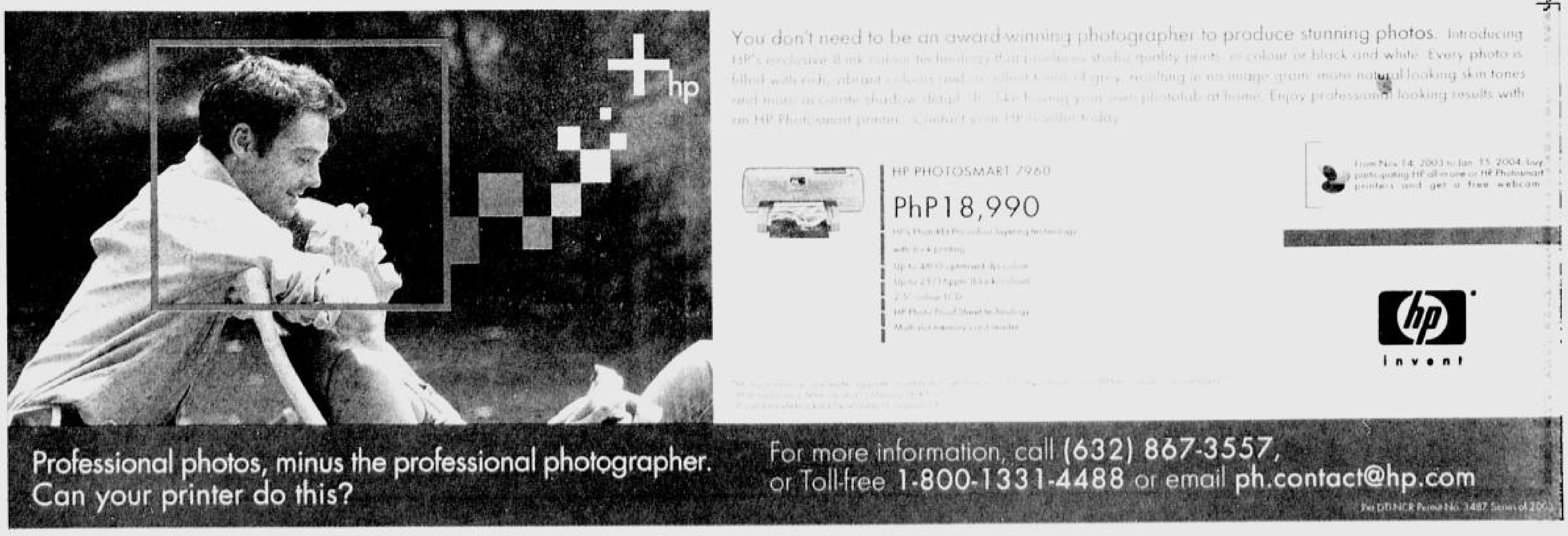

O, come all ye faithful!
All Bank of Commerce branches will be open on Dec. 26, and the following branches will serve you on Jan. 2:

• Sta. Ana • Rockwell • Greenhills • Kamuning • Tutuban • Malabon • Diliman • Concepcion • Pasay • Ermita • NAIA • Davao • Batangas-P. Burgos • San Pedro • Alabang • Bicutan • Baliuag • Balibago • La Union • Dagupan • Iloilo • Cebu • Luzuriaga • Cagayan de Oro-Lapasan.

Looking after you.

Bank of Commerce
www.bankcom.com.ph

Member: PDIC. Deposits insured up to P100,000 per depositor. MEGALINK


You don't need to be an award-winning photographer to produce stunning photos. Introducing HP's exclusive 8-ink colour technology that produces studio quality prints in colour or black and white. Every photo is filled with rich, vibrant colours and excellent tones of grey, resulting in no image grain, more natural looking skin tones and more accurate shadow detail. It's like having your own photolab at home. Enjoy professional looking results with an HP Photosmart printer. Contact your HP reseller today.

HP PHOTOSMART 7960

PhP18,990

From Nov 14, 2003 to Jan 15, 2004 buy participating HP all-in-one or HP Photosmart printers and get a free webcam

hp invent

Professional photos, minus the professional photographer. Can your printer do this?

For more information, call (632) 867-3557, or Toll-free 1-800-1331-4488 or email ph.contact@hp.com

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 3487 Series of 2003

Republic of thePhilippines
DEPARTMENT OF AGRARIAN REFORM

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 07
Series of 2003

SUBJECT: **CY 2003 GUIDELINES ON THE IDENTIFICATION, SCREENING AND SELECTION OF, AND DISTRIBUTION TO AGRARIAN REFORM BENEFICIARIES (ARBs) OF PRIVATE AGRICULTURAL LANDS UNDER REPUBLIC ACT (R.A.) NO. 6657.**

Pursuant to Section 4, Article XIII of the Constitution, as restated in Section 2, Paragraph 3 of Republic Act (R.A.) No. 6657, also known as the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law (CARL), the agrarian reform program is founded on the rights of farmers and regular farmworkers who are landless to own directly or collectively the lands they till or, in the case of other farmworkers, to receive a just share of the fruits thereof. In all cases, the security of tenure on the land of the farmers and farmworkers prior to the approval of R.A. No. 6657 shall be respected.

The revised rules and regulations on identification, screening and selection of, and distribution to Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries (ARBs) of private agricultural lands under R.A. No. 6657 are hereby promulgated to define the parameters and qualifications which shall be used in identifying the ARBs who are qualified to receive the Certificates of Land Ownership Award (CLOAs).

ARTICLE I
GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section 1. Coverage. This Administrative Order (A.O.) shall govern the identification, screening and selection of landless ARBs who may own individually or collectively the lands they till or receive a just share of the fruits thereof, and the distribution of all private agricultural lands, including the improvements thereon and/or other facilities acquired under R.A. No. 6657 and lands under Executive Order (E.O.) No. 407 as amended by E.O. No. 448, as amended.

Section 2, Statement of Policies.

2.1 Upon land acquisition, the government, through the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), shall immediately take steps to distribute the land to qualified beneficiaries and to make available support and coordinative services to enhance productivity.

2.2 Qualified beneficiaries shall include those determined/identified during the DAR's actual investigation and documentation as landless residents of the same barangay or in the absence thereof, landless residents of the same municipality, following the order of priority in Section 22 of R.A. No. 6657, to wit:

2.2.1 agricultural lessees and share tenants;
2.2.2 regular farmworkers;
2.2.3 seasonal farmworkers;
2.2.4 other farmworkers;
2.2.5 actual tillers or occupants of public lands;
2.2.6 collective or cooperatives of the above beneficiaries; and
2.2.7 others directly working on the land.

Provided, however, that the children of landowners who are qualified under Section 6 of R.A. No. 6657 shall be given preference in the distribution of the land of their parents as evidenced by a Certificate of Land Ownership Award (CLOA); *Provided further,* that actual tenant-tillers in the landholding shall not be ejected or removed therefrom.

A landless beneficiary is one who owns less than three (3) hectares of agricultural land.

2.3 In all cases, the aggregate award to a qualified beneficiary shall not exceed the limit of three (3) hectares and his total land ownership as a result of the award shall not exceed three (3) hectares. However, a qualified beneficiary may be awarded an area in excess of the three (3) hectare award ceiling only if:

2.3.1 the excess is negligible (e.g., 0.0975, 0.0099 hectare); and

2.3.2 it would be technically and administratively impractical to allocate the same to another qualified beneficiary.

2.4 Equitable distribution of the land shall be observed subject to the following considerations:

2.4.1 Actual occupancy of a tenant shall be the basis of the award, provided it does not exceed three (3) hectares;

2.4.2 After the tenants and/or actual occupants have been awarded the maximum area of three (3) hectares, the continuous cultivation of lands in excess of the award limit shall be strictly prohibited. The excess area shall be distributed to other qualified beneficiaries. However, the tenant/occupant shall be given reasonable time to harvest the produce of his/her crop subject to the rules on standing crops.

2.4.3 For untenanted land, all the farmworkers therein as qualified under Article II hereof, shall be considered as potential beneficiaries in the estate, provided that the proportional share of each will not exceed three (3) hectares, otherwise, additional farmworkers shall be considered.

2.4.4 For unoccupied lands, each identified beneficiary may be allowed the award ceiling of three (3) hectares, provided there are enough lands for distribution under CARP in the barangay to accommodate others who are equally qualified but who may not have been considered as awardees in the land under acquisition.

2.4.5 If due to the excessive number of tenants, lessees and/or farmworkers, the landholding acquired is not sufficient to accommodate some of the qualified beneficiaries, they may be granted ownership of other lands within the municipality available for distribution under CARL (i.e., excess land).

2.4.6 Tenants in the retained areas shall be given preference in other landholdings subject to those who are already in place, in accordance with Section 6 of R.A. No. 6657.

2.5 In general, lands shall be distributed directly to individual qualified beneficiaries. In case it is not economically feasible and sound to divide the lands, then it shall be owned collectively by the qualified beneficiaries who shall form a cooperative or association.

2.6 To facilitate the distribution of lands, this shall preferably be transferred collectively to groups of qualified beneficiaries. The qualified beneficiaries may opt for collective ownership, such as co-ownership or farmers cooperative or some other form of collective organization; *Provided,* That the total area that may be awarded shall not exceed the total number of co-owners or members of the cooperative or collective organization multiplied by the award limit of three (3) hectares, except in meritorious cases as may be determined by Presidential Agrarian Reform Council (PARC). Title to the property shall be issued in the name of the co-owners or the cooperative or collective organization, as the case may be.

2.7 For purposes of this A.O., the Rules on Co-ownership under Articles 484 to 501 of the New Civil Code of the Philippines shall suppletory govern the property relations as mentioned in Section 25 of R.A. No. 6657, co-ownership or some other forms of collective ownership, except farmers cooperative under commercial farms. (LAD-ID SCRN & DSTRN Annex "A").

2.8 The farmworkers who are husband and wife may be entitled to three (3) hectares each provided that they qualify as ARBs as individuals and that their vested rights to the land have been duly established. A separate CLOA shall be issued to each spouse.

2.9 All farmworkers, regardless of classification, but excluding those holding managerial or supervisory positions in the agricultural enterprise or corporation at the time of the effectivity of the CARL or on June 15, 1988 may qualify as ARBs.

2.10 In the event that there are enough agricultural lands for distribution and following the order of priority under Section 22 of R.A. No. 6657, the farmworker-beneficiaries, who are in or hired at the commercial farm on or prior to 15 June 1988 shall have the priority of award of a maximum of three (3) hectares.

On the other hand, farmworkers who were hired after the effectivity of CARL shall be accommodated based on their length of service reckoned from 15 June 1988, and subject to Section 4 of this A.O.

2.11 If the land is not sufficient, only the bonafide farmworkers as of 15 June 1988 shall be accommodated or qualified as ARBs.

2.12 Any potential ARB who fails to signify his/her interest to be an ARB before the expiration of the fifteen (15) day posting of the masterlist of ARBs by the Beneficiary Screening Committee (BSC) or the DAR Municipal Office (DARMO) is deemed to have waived his/her right to be an ARB.

2.13 If threat or intimidation by the former landowner is the cause of such failure to signify interest, the potential ARB waives his/her right to be an ARB if he/she fails to report in writing such threat or intimidation to any DAR office within thirty (30) days from the last day of public posting of the masterlist of ARBs by the Beneficiary Screening Committee (BSC) or DARMO.

2.14 Petitions and/or protests for inclusion in and exclusion from the masterlist of ARBs shall be governed by the rules for agrarian law implementation cases. In case of petitions/protests where the registered CLOAs have been distributed, the Department of Agrarian Reform Adjudication Board (DARAB) Rules of Procedures shall apply.

2.15 Upon receipt by the landowner of the corresponding payment or, in case of rejection or no response from the landowner, upon the deposit with an accessible bank designated by the DAR of the compensation in cash or in agrarian reform bonds in accordance with Section 16 (e) of R.A. No. 6657, the ARBs may be installed at the time the DAR takes possession of the land, or upon transfer of the title of the land in the name of the Republic of the Philippines, provided that the landowner shall be given a reasonable time to harvest the standing crops unharvested pursuant to Section 28 of R.A. No. 6657.

2.16 In the case of commercial farms, no potential ARBs shall take possession or prematurely enter landholdings subject of CARP coverage or with issued Notices of Coverage by DAR.

2.17 The existence of labor-related problems between the landowner and the farmworkers, and questions on the ownership of the subject landholding and payment of just compensation shall in no case deter or delay the process of land acquisition and distribution of the landholding.

2.18 Land improvements and facilities such as roads, bridges, warehouses, irrigation systems and the like, for common use and benefit as may be defined by DAR, may be transferred through a Farmers' Association or Cooperative, or in the absence thereof, through co-ownership, as far as practicable.

2.19 The processing of identification and screening of potential ARBs shall be held in abeyance until after the lapse of the sixty (60)-day period from receipt of the notice of coverage as provided under DAR A.O. No. 1, Series of 2003 titled, "2003 Rules Governing Issuance of Notice of Coverage and Acquisition of Agricultural Lands Under R.A. No. 6657", or upon the final determination by authorized agency of the petition for retention, exclusion and exemption, if any were filed.

Section 3. Definitions of Terms

(a) *Agrarian Dispute* refers to any controversy relating to tenurial arrangements, whether leasehold, tenancy, stewardship, or otherwise, over land devoted to agriculture, including disputes concerning farmworkers' associations, or representation of persons in negotiating, fixing, maintaining, changing or seeking to arrange terms and conditions of such tenurial arrangements.

It includes any controversy relating to compensation of lands acquired under R.A. No. 6657 and other terms and conditions of transfer of ownership from landowners to farmworkers, tenants and other ARBs, whether the disputants stand in proximate relation of farm operator and beneficiary, landowner and tenant, or lessor and lessee.

(b) *Award* is the issuance of title as evidenced by the CLOA to qualified agrarian reform beneficiaries.

(c) *Bandillo* means of making a public announcement using any form of public address system or any indigenous or local improvised instrument like hornpipe or megaphone.

(d) *Cooperatives* shall refer to organizations composed primarily of small agricultural producers, farmers, farmworkers, or other agrarian reform beneficiaries who voluntarily organize themselves for the purpose of pooling land, human, technological, financial or other economic resources and operate on the principle of one member, one vote. A juridical person may be a member of a cooperative, with the same rights and duties as a natural person.

(e) *Farmworker* refers to a natural person who renders service for value as an employee or laborer in an agricultural enterprise or farm regardless of whether his compensation is paid on a daily, weekly, monthly or "pakyaw" basis. The term includes an individual whose work has ceased as a consequence of, or in connection with, a pending agrarian dispute and who has not obtained a substantially equivalent and regular farm employment.

(f) *Labor Dispute* includes any controversy or matter concerning terms or conditions of employment or the association or representation of persons in negotiating, fixing, maintaining, changing or arranging the terms and conditions of employment, regardless of whether the disputants stand in the proximate relation of employer and employee.

(g) *Managerial or Supervisory Employee* is a natural person who is employed in an agricultural enterprise or farm and is vested with powers or prerogatives to: (1) lay down and execute management policies; (2) hire, transfer, suspend, lay-off, recall, discharge, assign or discipline employees; and/or (3) effectively recommend such managerial actions.

(h) *Regular Farmworker* refers to a natural person who is employed on a permanent basis by an agricultural enterprise or farm.

(i) *Seasonal Farmworker* refers to a natural person who is employed on a recurrent, periodic or intermittent basis by an agricultural enterprise or farm, whether as a permanent or a non-permanent laborer, such as "dumaan," "sacada," and the like.

(j) *Technical Farmworker* refers to a natural person employed by an agricultural enterprise or farm, who is highly educated and trained, and performs functions in the fields of science, engineering, medicine, education/training and other related areas, but who is not vested with managerial or supervisory functions. Example of such employees are: chemists, agronomists, veterinarians, soil analyst and the like.

(k) *Other Farmworkers* refer to farmworkers who do not fall under paragraphs (g), (h), (i), and (j) of this Section.

(l) *Standing Crop* refers to harvestable agricultural produce or a portion thereof (e.g., fruits, sap, root) normally harvested for such particular crop growing on the land at the time the DAR takes possession thereof.

(m) *Substantially Equivalent and Regular Employment* shall mean any employment or profession from which the applicant farmer derives income equivalent to the income of a regular farmworker in the deferred farm for at least one year before June 15, 1988.

(n) *Vested Right* is some right or interest in property that has been fixed and established, and is no longer open to doubt or controversy.

ARTICLE II
QUALIFICATION AND DISQUALIFICATION OF ARBs

Section 4. Qualifications. Only those who meet the following qualifications shall be eligible as beneficiaries:

4.1 *General Qualifications.* All agrarian reform beneficiaries must be:

4.1.1 Landless as defined by R.A. No. 6657;

4.1.2 Filipino citizen;

4.1.3 Permanent resident of the barangay and/or municipality, if applicable.

4.1.4 At least fifteen (15) years of age or head of family at the time of acquisition of the property (titled in the name of the Republic of the Philippines), or at least 18 years old as of 15 June 1988 in the case of Commercial Farms (CFs); and

4.1.5 Willing and have the ability and aptitude to cultivate and make the land productive.

4.2 *Specific Qualifications for Farmworkers in Commercial Farms.* In addition to item 4.1 above, the applicant must have been employed in the property being covered on June 15, 1988.

Section 5. Grounds for Disqualification/Exclusion. The following shall be the grounds for disqualification/exclusion as ARBs of the CARP:

5.1. Failure to meet the qualifications as provided for under Section 22 of R.A. No. 6657;

5.2. Non-payment of an aggregate of three (3) annual amortizations or default in payment of three (3) annual amortizations with the landowner (LO) that resulted to the foreclosure of mortgage on the awarded land by the LBP or repossession by the landowners (in the case of voluntary land transfer/direct payment scheme or VLT/DPS) of the awarded lands except if the non-payment of the rental is due to crop failure as a result of fortuitous events per Section 36(6) of R.A. No. 3844, to the extent of seventy-five percent (75%);

5.3. Misuse or diversion of financial support services extended to them (Section 37 of R.A. No. 6657);

5.4. Negligence or misuse of the land or any support extended to them (Section 22 of R.A. No. 6657);

5.5. Material misrepresentation of the ARB's basic qualifications as provided for under Section 22 of R.A. No. 6657, P.D. No. 27, and other agrarian laws;

5.6. Sale, disposition, or abandonment of the lands awarded by government under CARP or P.D. No. 27 which is violative of the agrarian laws;

5.7. Conversion of agricultural lands to non-agricultural use without prior approval from the DAR;

5.8. Retirement from the service, whether optional or mandatory, or voluntary resignation, provided this was not attended by coercion and/or deception, and there is no case questioning said retirement or voluntary resignation by the applicant as of the date of approval of this Order;

5.9. Dismissal from the service for cause and there is no case filed questioning said dismissal as of the approval of this Order and if there is any such case, the same has been affirmed by the proper entity of government;

5.10. Obtaining a substantially equivalent and regular employment, as defined in Section 3 (m) of this A.O.;

5.11. Retrenchment from the farm and receipt of separation pay, and the retrenchment not having been appealed or questioned in the proper government entity as of the approval of this A.O.;

5.12. Execution of a waiver of right to become an ARB in exchange for due compensation and waiver not having been questioned in the proper government entity as of the approval of this A.O.;

5.13. Refusal to be listed as an ARB and to provide pertinent information as requested by the DAR in the invitation letter, which shall be construed as unwillingness on the part of the potential beneficiary to be listed;

5.14. Forcible entry into the property or illegal detainer (e.g. after beneficiaries were paid by the LO); and

5.15. Commission of any violation of the agrarian reform laws and regulations, or related issuances, as determined with finality after proper proceedings by the appropriate tribunal or agency.

ARTICLE III
RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF ARBS

Section. 6. Rights and Obligations. The rights and responsibilities of the ARB shall commence from the time the DAR issues the Certificate of Land Ownership Award (CLOA). Ownership of the beneficiary shall be evidenced by the CLOA, which contains the restrictions and conditions provided for in R.A. No. 6657, and shall be registered in the Registry of Deeds (ROD) concerned and annotated on the Transfer Certificate of Title in the name of the Republic of the Philippines (RP).

6.1 ARBs have the right of usufruct over the land from the time the DAR takes actual possession of the same until the award of a CLOA.

6.2 Pending the award of the CLOA and for the purpose of establishing usufructuary rights, the DAR at the time it takes actual possession of the land, shall immediately inform the ARBs that they have been identified and qualified to receive the land.

6.3 All ARBs shall exercise the diligence of a good father of the family in the use, cultivation and maintenance of the land including the improvements thereon. Negligence, misuse, or unauthorized sale of the land or any support extended to an ARB shall be a ground for the forfeiture of his right as such.

6.4 Lands awarded to ARBs under this Act may not be sold, transferred or conveyed except through hereditary succession or to the Government, or to the LBP, or to other qualified beneficiaries for a period of ten (10) years: *Provided.*

Inquirer--December 29, 2003
ADVT

however, that the children or the spouse of the transferor shall have a right to repurchase the land from the government or the LBP within a period of two (2) years from the date of transfer.

6.5 ARBs have the obligation to pay the LBP in thirty (30) annual amortizations with interest at six percent (6%) per annum unless the ARB opts to accelerate payment.

ARTICLE IV
INFORMATION CAMPAIGN

Section 7. Information Campaign. For the effective implementation of the identification and screening of ARBs and distribution of lands, the concerned offices/units under the DAR Provincial Office shall assist the DARMO in undertaking information dissemination on the activities for the identification, screening and selection of ARBs, in coordination with the Barangay Agrarian Reform Committee (BARC), or in the absence thereof, the Barangay Council, accredited Non-Government Organization/People's Organization (NGO/PO), through "bandillo," mobile system, distribution of flyers, farmers assembly or meeting and other possible means. The information campaign shall be undertaken prior to the identification and screening of ARBs, and shall include or contain the following:

a) Constitutional rights of an ARB;

b) Qualifications/Disqualifications of a potential ARB;

c) Procedures on the identification, screening and selection of ARBs (including posting period, protests mechanism, etc.);

d) Rights and obligations of the ARB, especially the execution of an Affidavit of Waiver of Rights to Become ARB or Affidavit of Potential ARB's Refusal to be Included in the List of Potential ARBs (LAD ID, SCRN & DSTRN Form No. 4 or 4.1); and

e) Rules and procedures on the distribution of lands;

ARTICLE V
OPERATING PROCEDURES

Section 8. Procedures for the Identification of Potential ARBs (See Annex "K" on the Process Flow). The DARMO shall:

8.1. Inform and request the concerned LO to submit the names of his/her preferred beneficiaries (i.e., qualified children) for inclusion in the list of potential ARBs using LAD-ID, SCRN & DSTRN Annex "B" (CARP Form No. 5(a), Revised 2003).

If the LO fails to submit the names of his/her children/preferred beneficiaries within sixty (60) days from receipt of Notice of Coverage, ensure that the LO signs the Affidavit of Express Waiver of Right to Nominate Preferred Beneficiaries (LAD-ID, SCRN & DSTRN Form No.1). In case the LO refuses to sign the above affidavit, accomplish/fill up the Affidavit of Landowner's Refusal to Execute Waiver of Rights to Nominate Preferred Beneficiaries (LAD-ID SCRN & DSTRN Form No. 1.1). In both instances, the BARC or in the absence thereof, the Barangay Council representative shall attest to the LO's execution of waiver or refusal to sign waiver.

8.2. Gather information on the names of potential beneficiaries of the subject landholding seeking for the purpose, the assistance of the BARC, or in the absence thereof, the Barangay Council and all other reliable sources of information in the community.

8.3. Cause the posting of the preliminary list of names of potential beneficiaries for a period of fifteen (15) days in at least three (3) conspicuous places:

1. in the respective barangay halls of the barangays where the landholding/s is/are located;

2. in the municipal halls of the municipalities where the landholding/s is/are located; and

3. in other conspicuous places in the community.

The preliminary list shall be posted in a billboard made of strong materials such as weather-resistant plywood, galvanized iron, tin, panaflex, or other similar durable materials which could accommodate all the names of the potential ARBs, readable and in the local dialect understood by the residents.

The preliminary list of potential beneficiaries shall be accompanied by a general invitation written in both English/Pilipino and in the local dialect enjoining the listed potential ARBs and other concerned parties, if any, who are not yet in the initial list, to signify their intent or interest to the DARMO to be included in the preliminary list of potential ARBs (LAD-ID, SCRN & DSTRN Form No. 2) and to submit any or all of the following documents as proof of their qualification as an ARB within fifteen (15) days from posting of the said list.

a. community tax certificate (cedula) or barangay certificate indicating potential ARBs as permanent or bonafide resident of the barangay;

b. employment certificate;

c. payslips or payroll;

d. certificate of aggregate landholding from the city/municipal assessor;

e. original copy of a sworn affidavit/statement that the farmer/farmworker was under duress/threat by the landowner to support the party's right to be included in the preliminary list as an ARB;

f. voter's identification card or certified copy of voter's registration record; and

g. other identification documents with probative value.

The following documents, which may be used as basis for the qualifcation or disqualification of potential ARBs, may be required:

i. Original copy of waiver as beneficiary under oath or duly notarized;

ii. Original or certified copy of decision order or ruling by a court, quasi-judicial body or administrative agency in the event that there was a case related to the dismissal, retrenchment, etc. of the potential ARB;

iii. Original or certified copy of letter of resignation for farmworker beneficiaries;

iv. Original or certified copy of notice of dismissal or retrenchment for farmworker beneficiaries; or

v. Such other proof that will establish the qualifications or disqualifications of the potential beneficiary (certified true-copy).

8.4. After the required period of posting, secure a Certificate of Posting Compliance from barangay/municipal officials, and/or other authorized officials in the community, indicating therein the inclusive days of posting (LAD-ID,SCRN & DSTRN Form No. 3).

8.5 Ensure that the potential ARB who fails to signify interest to be an ARB before the expiration of the fifteen (15) day posting of the master list of ARBs shall execute an Affidavit of Waiver of Rights to Become an ARB (LAD-ID, SCRN & DSTRN Form No. 4). Otherwise, accomplish the Affidavit of Potential ARB's Refusal to be Included in the List of Potential ARB (LAD-ID SCRN & DSTRN Form No. 4.1). In both instances, the BARC shall attest to the veracity of the waiver of rights by the ARB and the affidavit of the MARO.

8.6 Schedule the conduct of a meeting which shall be held not later than fifteen (15) days from the last day of posting.

8.7 Send invitation letters/liham paanyaya (LAD-ID, SCRN & DSTRN Form No. 5) by personal service or by registered mail with return card to potential beneficiaries and all those who have signified their interest for inclusion in the master list, and post a general notice (LAD-ID, SCRN & DSTRN Form No. 6) to other interested/concerned parties on the subject landholding, regarding the schedule of meeting within five (5) days from the last day of posting of the initial list of potential beneficiaries.

For invitation letters/notice of meeting served by personal service and positively acknowledged or received by the concerned potential ARB, the DARMO shall accomplish Item I (For Liham Paanyaya Received by Potential ARBs) of the Proof of Personal Service (LAD-ID, SCRN & DSTRN Form No. 7) for file. In case the potential ARB refuses to receive/accept the invitation letter/notice of meeting for whatever reason, the DARMO shall fill-up/accomplish Item II (For Liham Paanyaya Refused to be Received by Potential ARB) of the Proof of Personal Service for file.

The invitation letters/notice of meeting shall state that the potential beneficiaries and other interested/concerned parties should bring with them the lacking documents provided under Section 8, Item 8.3 of this A.O. as proof of their qualification as an ARB, if any.

Section 9. Procedures on the Screening of ARBs (See Annex "L" on the Process Flow). The screening of all qualified beneficiaries for all CARP-covered lands shall subscribe to the following procedures:

9.1 The DARMO shall:

9.1.1 With the assistance of the BARC, or in the absence thereof, the Barangay Council, conduct a meeting on the scheduled date with the potential beneficiaries and undertake the following:

9.1.1.1 Explain in the local dialect to all potential beneficiaries the salient features of this A.O.;

9.1.1.2 Interview all potential ARBs individually; and

9.1.1.3 Assist all potential beneficiary-applicants in accomplishing the Beneficiary Application Form (LAD-ID, SCRN & DSTRN Annex "C").

9.1.2 In close coordination with the BARC review and evaluate the potential beneficiaries' application forms vis-à-vis documents/evidence submitted and ensure that based on the information from the applicant himself or other persons and the foregoing documents, the qualifications provided in Article II, Section 4 of this A.O. are met.

9.1.3 If the potential ARB qualifies as beneficiary, include his/her name in the preliminary list. However, the potential ARBs who do not meet the qualifications provided in Article II, Section 4 of this A.O. shall be excluded in the preliminary list and be informed, through personal service or registered mail with return card. (LAD-ID, SCRN & DSTRN Form No. 8).

9.1.4 Prepare the updated preliminary list of ARBs.

9.1.5 For farms other than commercial, the updated preliminary list shall serve as reference for the conduct of the field investigation by the DARMO pursuant to Section 10, Item 10.2.1 of this A.O.

For commercial farms, submit the updated preliminary list of ARBs, together with application forms and supporting documents/evidence to the Beneficiary Screening Committee (BSC) through the DAR Provincial Office (DARPO).

9.2 FOR COMMERCIAL FARMS, OTHER PLANTATION FARMS AND IDLE LANDS:

9.2.1 Beneficiary Screening Committee (BSC) – a Beneficiary Screening Committee shall be created for the purpose of screening and selecting ARBs;

9.2.1.1 Functions:

The Beneficiary Screening Committee shall exercise exclusive original jurisdiction in evaluating qualifications, and in screening and selecting ARBs in commercial farms, other plantation farms and idle lands. In the performance of its tasks, the Committee may invite landowner representatives or representatives from people's or non-government organizations, and/or such other groups or entities in the area, to act as resource persons as may be necessary, during the selection and screening process.

9.2.1.2 Composition:

i. Provincial Agrarian Reform Officer (PARO) as Ex-Officio Chairman;

ii. Municipal Agrarian Reform Officer (MARO) concerned;

iii. Legal officer of DARPO concerned;

iv. Provincial Agrarian Reform Coordinating Committee (PARCCOM) Chairman or his duly authorized representative; and

v. BARC Chairman or his duly authorized representative, of each of the barangays where the subject landholding is situated (in case landholding covers more than one barangay).

9.2.2 The BSC Chair shall convene the Committee. The Committee shall undertake the following:

9.2.2.1 Conduct the review, verification and validation of the updated preliminary list of potential ARBs, submitted by the DARMO, on the basis of the attached application forms and other supporting documents.

9.2.2.2 Within ten (10) days from receipt from the DARMO, cause the posting of the updated preliminary list of potential ARBs for fifteen (15) days in at least three (3) conspicuous places:

a. barangay hall/s of the barangay/s where the landholding is located;

b. municipal halls where the landholding is located; and

c. other conspicuous places in the community.

The updated list, shall contain a statement written in both English/Pilipino and in the local dialect, that any person may request/petition for inclusion in or exclusion from the said list within the fifteen (15) day posting period pursuant to Section 2, Item 2.12 of this Order.

9.2.2.3 Secure Certificate of Posting Compliance from the proper municipal and barangay officials after the fifteen (15) day posting period, indicating therein the inclusive dates of posting (LAD-ID SCRN & DSTRN Form No. 3).

9.2.2.4 Schedule the conduct of public hearing for inclusion in and exclusion from the updated preliminary list of actual/potential ARBs. Such public hearings shall commence not earlier than ten (10) days nor later than ninety (90) days from the last day of posting of the updated list.

Section 10. Procedures on the Selection of ARBs (See Annex "M" on the Process Flow).

10.1 FOR COMMERCIAL FARMS, OTHER PLANTATION FARMS AND IDLE LANDS

The BSC shall:

10.1.1 Send by registered mail with return card, Notice of Public Hearing (LAD-ID, SCRN & DSTRN Form No. 9) to all potential ARBs.

10.1.2 Conduct the hearings on the scheduled date with those who signified intent for inclusion, parties who filed protests on the posted preliminary list of ARBs and other concerned parties.

10.1.3 Within fifteen (15) days after the public hearing, prepare the master list of ARBs (LAD-ID, SCRN & DSTRN Form No. 10). The criteria for the inclusion or exclusion of potential ARBs in or from the master list as the case may be, shall be based on Sections 4 and 5 of this A.O. All qualified ARBs are ranked in accordance with the order of priority under Section 22 of R.A. No. 6657. Lower ranking ARBs may fall into a "waiting list" category of the same master list if the subject landholding cannot accommodate all qualified ARBs in the master list.

10.1.4 Post the master list in the same manner and for the same purpose as provided under Section 8, Item 8.3 hereof.

10.1.5 In case no protest is filed within the fifteen (15) day period of posting of the master list, transmit a copy of the master list to DARMO, through the DARPO, for the corresponding preparation of Land Distribution Folder (LDF).

10.2 FOR FARMS OTHER THAN COMMERCIAL FARMS

The DARMO shall:

10.2.1 Conduct a field investigation on the subject landholding, including the identity of the potential beneficiary/ies.

10.2.2 Re-evaluate the potential beneficiaries indicated in the updated preliminary list of ARBs based on the submitted documents/evidence and the result of the field investigation.

10.2.3 In case one or more conditions provided under Section 5 hereof is present, exclude disqualified applicants from the updated preliminary list of ARBs. Thereafter, send a Notice of Disqualification, citing the reason for the disqualification, through personal delivery or registered mail with return card. (LAD-ID, SCRN & DSTRN Form No. 8)

10.2.4 Rank all qualified ARBs in accordance with the order of priority under Section 22 of R.A. No. 6657.

10.2.5 Prepare and post the master list of ARBs (LAD-ID, SCRN & DSTRN Form No. 10) for fifteen (15) days in the designated areas as provided in Section 8, Item 8.3 hereof.

10.2.6 Consolidate into one (1) folder all the documents submitted by the qualified ARBs, including the investigation report and other requirements needed in the preparation of the LDF.

10.2.7 Submit master list of ARBs and forward the LDF of the subject landholding to the DARPO concerned.

Section 11. Procedures on the Resolution of Protests in the Selection of ARBs (See Annex "N" on the Process Flow).

11.1 FOR COMMERCIAL FARMS, OTHER PLANTATION FARMS AND IDLE LANDS

11.1.1 Any person or interested party may file a written protest for the inclusion in/exclusion from the master list with the DARRO, not later than fifteen (15) days from the last day of its posting;

11.1.2 Upon receipt of the protest, the DAR Regional Office (DARRO) shall order the BSC to transmit all pertinent records/documents of the case. The resolution of protest shall be in accordance with Section 11, Item 11.3 of this Order.

11.2 FOR FARMS OTHER THAN COMMERCIAL FARMS

11.2.1 Any interested party may file a written protest regarding the master list of ARBs to the DARRO, through the DARPO, not later than fifteen (15) days from the last day of its posting.

11.2.2 Upon receipt of the protest, the DARPO shall:

11.2.2.1 Conduct and prepare field investigation report; and

11.2.2.2 Transmit pertinent documents and duly signed investigation report with concomitant recommendation to DARRO.

11.3 FOR COMMERCIAL FARMS, OTHER PLANTATION FARMS, IDLE LANDS AND FARMS OTHER THAN COMMERCIAL

11.3.1 The DARRO shall conduct an investigation on the protest/petition filed to determine the merits of the case through summary proceedings;

11.3.2 The Regional Director (RD) shall resolve the protest within thirty (30) days from receipt of the BSC records of the case, or DARPO investigation report and recommendation;

11.3.3 The DARRO shall furnish the BSC/DARPO and all parties concerned a copy of the Regional Director's decision on the protest;

11.3.4 Pursuant to the RD's decision, the BSC/DARPO shall include in the master list the names of qualified potential ARBs and notify the DARMO for the preparation of the LDF. Likewise, exclude from the master list the names of disqualified potential ARBs and simultaneously inform all parties concerned of the RD's decision through registered mail or personal service.

The master list becomes final and executory after the lapse of fifteen (15) days from receipt of the Regional Director's decision on the protest, but such finality is only for the specific purpose of generating the CLOA. All ARBs in the master list who are not in the waiting list category shall be recipients of a CLOA for the subject landholding.

11.3.5 In case an appeal/motion for reconsideration is made on the Regional Director's decision/s or order/s for inclusion/exclusion of potential ARBs in/from the master list, the rules and procedures as provided under A.O. No. 3, Series of 2003 titled, "2003 Rules for Agrarian Law Implementation (ALI) Cases" shall be followed.

Section. 12. Procedures for the Generation and Registration of Title (CLOA) (See Annex "O" on the Process Flow). Upon receipt of the Memorandum of the Regional Director to take possession of the property, together with the copy of the TCT in the name of the Republic of the Philippines and copy of Deeds of Transfer or Proof of Trust Deposit from the Land Bank of the Philippines, as the case may be, the PARO shall direct the MARO to proceed with the land distribution in accordance with the following procedures:

The DARMO shall:

12.1.1 Inform the qualified ARBs or the Farmer's Cooperative/Association of their identification as ARBs and the commencement of their usufructuary rights over the property upon verification and validation based on the master list of ARBs and Application to Purchase and Farmer's Undertakings or APFUs (LAD-ID, SCRN & DSTRN Annex "D", CARP Form No. 4 per A.O. No. 2, Series of 1996).

12.1.2 Assist ARBs in the accomplishment of FB Request for Issuance of CLOA (LAD-ID, SCRN & DSTRN Annex "E", CARP Form No. 19 per A.O. No. 2, Series of 1996).

12.1.3 In case the ARBs prefer individual ownership, determine, in coordination with the Department of Agriculture (DA) and other concerned agencies, whether the land is economically feasible and sound to divide. If the land is feasible and sound to divide, request the DARRO, through DARPO, to immediately conduct a survey of the landholding.

Upon receipt of the Approved Survey Plan (ASP) from DARPO, prepare the Land Distribution Folder (LDF).

The LDF shall contain the following documents:

12.1.3.1 Copy of the Letters to Qualified ARBs Allocating Area of Award (LAD-ID, SCRN & DSTRN Annex "F", CARP Form No. 19 per A.O. No. 10, Series of 1990);

12.1.3.2 FB's Request for Issuance of CLOA (LAD-ID, SCRN & DSTRN Annex "E", CARP Form No. 19 per A.O. No. 2, Series of 1996);

12.1.3.3 MARO's Certification (LAD-ID, SCRN & DSTRN Annex "G", CARP Form No. 20);

12.1.3.4 Copy of the Approved Survey Plan or Plan of the Property prepared and approved by a licensed Geodetic Engineer;

12.1.3.5 Copy of the TCT in the name of the Republic of the Philippines;

12.1.3.6 Copy of the Deed of Transfer or Certificate of Trust Deposit, as the case may be; and

12.1.3.7 Copy of the LDF Transmittal Memorandum (LAD-ID, SCRN & DSTRN Annex "H", CARP Form No. 21).

12.1.4 In case majority of the qualifying ARBs prefer collective ownership and the landholding is not feasible and sound to divide pursuant to Sections 25 and 29 of R.A. No. 6657, facilitate the organization and registration of the association or cooperative in coordination with the appropriate government agencies, i.e., Cooperative Development Authority (CDA), Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), or appropriate non-government agencies. In addition to the requirements mentioned above, submit the following documents:

12.1.4.1 Board Resolution authorizing any member of the association or cooperative to sign the application form on behalf of the association or cooperative; and

12.1.4.2 Articles of Incorporation and By Laws of the Cooperative or Association.

12.1.5 In the event that there are two (2) or more ARB cooperatives or associations in the landholding, determine the specific area to be allotted to each cooperative or association by drawing lots in the presence of all parties concerned.

If the qualifying ARBs fail to organize themselves into a cooperative or association in accordance with the requirements of the CDA or SEC, the Civil Code principles on co-ownership shall govern the cooperative or association ownership rights and obligations.

The preparation of the LDF shall be in accordance with the third paragraph of Section 12, Item 12.1.3 of this Order.

12.1.6 Forward the LDF to DARPO.

12.2 **The DARPO shall:**

12.2.1 Subsequent to the receipt from DARMO of the LDF pursuant to Section 12, Item 12.1.6:

12.2.1.1 Review all documents contained in the LDF to ensure that these are complete. In the case of lacking documents, require the DARMO to submit the pertinent documents;

12.2.1.2 In case ARBs prefer collective ownership or the landholding is not feasible/sound to divide, generate a collective CLOA (Original and Owner's Duplicate Certificate and as many Co-Owner's Duplicate Certificate) for the whole landholding in favor of the Farmers' Cooperative or Association, wherein all names of the ARBs, after the lead name, which appear on the face of the certificate of title, shall be typewritten on the succeeding pages of the title, with each name numbered consecutively, from "1" onwards, alphabetically arranged and reflecting the complete names (given, middle & surnames) of the ARBs pursuant to M.C. No. 24, Series of 1996. After the last typewritten name of ARBs, and immediately below a demarcating line, the words "nothing follows" shall be typed;

In the case of individual ownership, generate a CLOA (original and owners duplicate certificate) in the name of each ARB.

12.2.1.3 Ensure that all CLOAs shall contain the following annotation of lien in favor of the Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP):

ANNOTATION

The parcel of land described in this Certificate of Land Ownership Award (CLOA) is encumbered in favor of:

LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES

to ensure full payment of its value pursuant to R.A. No. 6657 by the agrarian reform beneficiaries/ farmer's cooperative or farmer's association named herein.

Date______

____
Provincial Agrarian Reform Officer

The PARO shall affix his/her initial on all copies of the CLOA (original owners and co-owners duplicate certificates in the case of collective CLOAs).

12.2.1.4 Prepare the corresponding Judicial Forms Utilization Worksheet (LAD-ID, SCRN & DSTRN Annex "I") in accordance with the systems and procedures for the requisition, issuance, utilization and accounting of EP/CLOA Judicial Forms.

12.2.1.5 File the LDF containing the supporting documents and forward the generated CLOA including Judicial Forms Utilization Worksheet to DARRO

12.3 The DARRO shall:

12.3.1 Review and validate the generated CLOAs. If in order, the Regional Director shall affix his/her initial on all copies of the CLOAs original owner's/co-owner's duplicate;

12.3.2 In case of lacking documents, require DARPO to submit the pertinent documents,

12.3.3 Return erroneously generated CLOA to DARPO for correction. Only error-free CLOAs shall be recommended for signature of the Secretary pursuant to existing guidelines; and

12.3.4 Forward signed and sealed CLOAs and the corresponding recording sheet with transmittal memorandum to DARPO for registration.

12.4 The DARPO shall:

Upon receipt from the DARRO of the signed and sealed CLOA pursuant to Section 12, Item 12.3.4:

12.4.1 Record signed and sealed CLOAs and enter the same in the CLOA Registry Book of the Register of Deeds (ROD);

12.4.2 Cause the registration of the CLOA with the ROD;

12.4.3 Reflect title number and date of registration in the CLOA Registry Book;

12.4.4 Provide the DARMO with a certified photocopy of duplicate CLOA/title in case of collective ownership; and

12.4.5 Reproduce certified photocopies of registered Owner's/Co-Owner's Duplicate CLOA/Titles and transmit the same to DARMO for distribution, retaining a copy for DARPO's future reference.

Section 13. Procedures on the Issuance of Title (See Annex "P" on the Process Flow).

13.1 Subsequent to the receipt from the DARPO of the registered owner's/co-owner's duplicate CLOA/title and certified photocopy of the same pursuant to Section 12, Item 12.4.5, the DARMO shall:

13.1.1 Record Owner's/Co-Owner's Duplicate CLOA/Title;

13.1.2 Prepare and submit to the LBP the Land Distribution Information Schedule (LDIS) thirty (30) days upon receipt of the CLOA;

13.1.3 Distribute Owner's/Co-Owner's Duplicate CLOA/title and ensure that these are duly received by the ARBs or Cooperative/Association;

13.1.4 Furnish the ARB a certified photocopy of co-owner's duplicate CLOA/title for collective ownership;

13.1.5 Assist ARBs in securing corresponding Tax Declaration from the Assessor/Treasurer's Office from the time the CLOA/title is distributed; and

13.1.6 Maintain a Registry Book of all CLOAs/Titles issued within the municipality and duly received by the ARBs, and prepares index card for all ARBs.

ARTICLE VI
GROUNDS FOR RE-OPENING OF ARB IDENTIFICATION AND SELECTION

Section 14. Re-Opening of ARB Identification and Selection

14.1 Subsequent to the issuance of CLOAs but prior to the installation of ARBs, the Regional Director may grant due course to a sworn petition to re-open the identification, screening and selection process on the grounds of duress or threat by the landowner against the petitioner during the identification phase. After installation of the ARBs, only the Secretary may grant due course to such a petition.

14.2 Any petition to re-open the ARB identification, screening and selection process subsequent to installation shall be directly filed with the Office of the Regional Director where the property is located which shall have the exclusive jurisdiction to act on the petition. The procedures shall be in accordance with A.O. No. 3, Series of 2003 titled, "2003 Rules for Agrarian Law Implementation Cases"

The re-opening of ARB identification, screening and selection shall, however, subscribe to the provisions for qualification, disqualification, rights and obligations, and procedures prescribed under pertinent sections of this Administrative Order.

ARTICLE VII
REPORTING AND MONITORING

Section 15. Procedures on Reporting and Monitoring of CLOA Distributed to ARBs (See Annex "Q" on the Process Flow).

15.1 Based on the master list, the DARMO shall prepare and submit to the DARPO a monthly report on CLOA distributed vis-à-vis master list of ARBs using LAD-ID, SCRN & DSTRN Form No.11 indicating name of ARBs, location, title no., lot no., area, crop planted, generation date, registration date and distribution date per landholding.

15.2 The DARPO shall:

15.2.1 Validate the DARMO report vis-à-vis the Judicial Form Utilization Worksheet (LAD-ID, SCRN & DSTRN Annex "I") and the Signing and Sealing Machine Utilization Recording/Reporting Sheet (LAD-ID, SCRN & DSTRN Annex "J") pursuant to existing guidelines on judicial forms; and

15.2.2 At the end of every quarter, consolidate and forward to BLAD-DARCO, copy furnished DARRO, the abovementioned monthly report (LAD-ID, SCRN & DSTRN Form No. 11).

ARTICLE VIII
FINAL PROVISIONS

Section 16. Transitory Provisions. In order to prevent delays in the identification, screening and selection of, and distribution to ARBs of private agricultural lands under R.A. No. 6657, documentation folders already forwarded to or pending in the DARRO shall continue to be processed under pertinent existing guidelines. However, all documentation folders still in the DARPO and DARMO levels at the time of effectivity of these guidelines shall be governed by this Administrative Order.

Section 17. Repealing Clause. This A.O. repeals A.O. No. 10, Series of 1990. All pertinent provisions of A.O. No. 6, Series of 1998 and A.O. No. 9, Series of 1998, and all other rules, regulations and issuances inconsistent herewith are hereby modified or repealed accordingly.

Section 18. Effectivity. This Administrative Order shall take effect ten (10) days after its publication in two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Diliman, Quezon City, 18 th day of December 2003.

ROBERTO M. PAGDANGANAN
Secretary

Inquirer--December 29 2003
ADVT

The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

China steps up alert for SARS outbreak

BEIJING—China on Sunday stepped up its nationwide alert for a possible outbreak of the deadly Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), a day after a man in southern Guangdong province was diagnosed as a suspected case.

The patient, a 32-year-old freelance journalist from a southern China television station, came down with SARS-like fever symptoms on Dec. 16 and was hospitalized for pneumonia four days later.

He was listed as a suspected SARS case on Saturday by China's health ministry, the first such case since health officials declared China SARS free in June following the initial outbreak of the mysterious disease.

"The diagnosis that the patient is a suspected SARS case still stands," Roy Wadia, spokesperson for the World Health Organization (WHO) office in Beijing, told AFP.

"So far the tests have been mixed, in testing done so far there have been some positive results and some negative results. They have to do a lot more testing."

A WHO expert was expected to arrive in Beijing on Monday and would quickly go on to the Guangzhou No. Eight People's Hospital in the capital of Guangdong province to help diagnose the patient, Wadia said.

The Guangzhou hospital had isolated the patient and some 32 medical workers who have treated him, while the rest of the country began scrambling to set up SARS surveillance mechanisms.

"This is the flu season and there is a lot of pneumonia at this time," Dr. Julie Hall, the WHO's resident disease expert in Beijing, told AFP.

"The health system here, especially in the high risk areas of Guangdong and Beijing have been working at a high level of awareness, so the detection of this case shows that the system is working."

Hall said a renewed outbreak of SARS was not unexpected, but urged China to further research into the possible animal causes of the disease and set up food hygiene sanitation regulations aimed at wild animal markets.

"The patient does not appear to be infectious, and he is recovering rather quickly," China's SARS disease expert Zhong Nanshan told the China Youth Daily.

"It is not strange that a few cases of SARS should reemerge, so there is no reason for people in the city to panic."

In Guangdong, orders were issued to disinfect the living quarters of the sick man and track down people he had come in contact with.

Monitoring stations for fever set up at travel points in and out of Guangdong were renewing efforts to stop feverish travelers from moving around the country, especially with a travel peak expected for the annual Lunar New Year holidays next month.

Airports and railway stations around China, including Beijing, were setting up special corridors for passengers from Guangdong in a further effort to monitor travelers' temperature and contain another possible outbreak. *AFP*

Singapore PM to announce soon when he'll step down

SINGAPORE—Singapore Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong said in remarks published Sunday that he would decide after the first quarter of next year when to step down and clear the way for a leadership change.

"Transition is on track and I would say, maybe after the first quarter of next year, I would be able to firm up on the date of my retirement as premier," broadcaster Channel NewsAsia quoted Goh as saying on its website.

"At the moment, I am open. I do not have any date in mind."

Declaring that the economy was on the mend, Goh said he would be comfortable handing over leadership if gross domestic product grew by 3 to 4 percent in 2004.

"When the economy does well, growth can achieve 4 percent, for example, when everything is in order, that's the right time to hand over the baton to the younger team," he said.

Singapore's official growth forecast for next year is between 3 and 5 percent as the city-state emerges from the havoc wrought by the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), the US-led war against Iraq and a weak global economy.

Several economists say the upper end of the target can be achieved.

Goh, who took over from Singapore's founding father Lee Kuan Yew in 1990, has already named Lee's son, Deputy Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, as his successor.

A public relations blitz aimed at softening Lee Hsien Loong's authoritarian image and the improving economy have fueled debate over when the leadership change will take place. *AFP*

Regalong Pangpamilya!
To: Nanay, Tatay, Kuya Mario, Ate Shiela, Mai-Mai, Jun-Jun, & Manang Belen
MAGIC SING
ENTER
THE ORIGINAL! MAGIC SING VIDEOKE MICROPHONE

Relive the spirit of true fellowship this Christmas.

ADVANCED RECORD and PLAY Feature

ASTRA MAGIC SING
A CONVERGENCE OF SERVICE & QUALITY
FROM THE ASTRA GROUP, INC., THE OFFICIAL PHILIPPINE DISTRIBUTOR OF MAGIC SING VIDEOKE MICROPHONE
www.astramagicsing.com
Manufactured by: ENTERTECH Co. Ltd. (Korea)

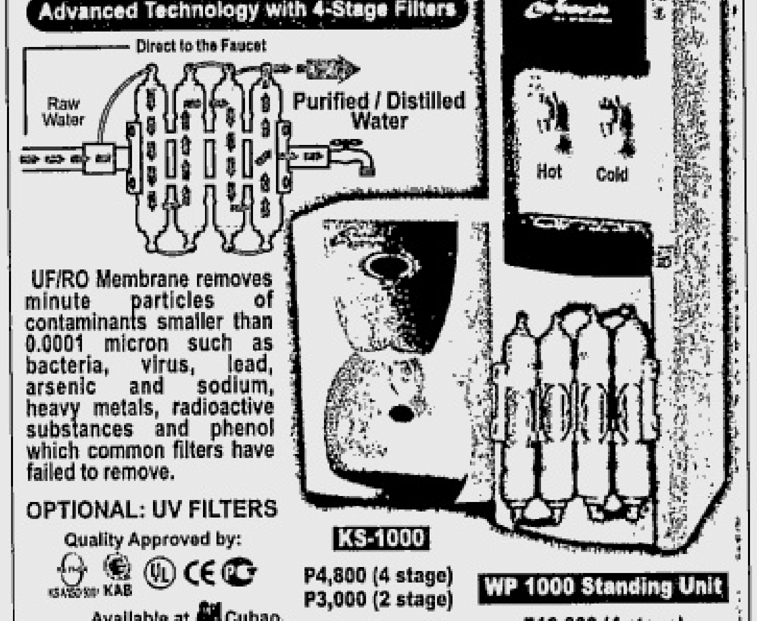
Available at:
SM APPLIANCE CENTER • RUSTANS DEPT. STORE • ANSONS EMPORIUM • CROSSINGS DEPT. STORE • AMBASSADOR APPLIANCES • HOTEL REMBRANDT • SOUND DIMENSION • GAISANO SOUTH GROUP

THE ASTRA GROUP, INC. G/F, Richbelt Tower Condominium, 17 Annapolis St. Greenhills, San Juan City • Tels. 722-4056, 722-6786 or 705-1321

SAY GOODBYE TO WATER DELIVERIES

Bio WATERPIA

Advanced Technology with 4-Stage Filters



UF/RO Membrane removes minute particles of contaminants smaller than 0.0001 micron such as bacteria, virus, lead, arsenic and sodium, heavy metals, radioactive substances and phenol which common filters have failed to remove.

OPTIONAL: UV FILTERS

Quality Approved by: KAB

KS-1000
P4,800 (4 stage)
P3,000 (2 stage)

WP 1000 Standing Unit
P10,000 (4 stage)

*No Installation Fee within Metro Manila
ALSO AVAILABLE FOR RENTAL

Available at SM Cubao, Fairview, Manila, Bacoor and Davao, Sogo, Automatic Centre, all Makro and True Value Outlets, Robinsons Handyman, Sta. Lucia East

For Inquiries and Dealership Call or Fax:
Makati Tel. nos.: 843-1171 • 892-1638 • 844-0562 • 840-2527 Fax no.: 816-4881
Pampanga Tel. nos.: (045) 961-1686 to 87
Laguna Tel. nos.: (049) 834-1316 • (049) 545-0178 • (049) 838-0816
Davao Tel. nos.: (082) 297-7257 / 8997

HAPPY HOLIDAY BANKING!

METROBANK IS HAPPY TO SERVE YOU EVEN ON HOLIDAYS.
Over 100 branches open on Dec. 20, 24, 26, 27, 28 & 31 and Jan. 2, 3 & 4, in addition to over 600 Metrobank E.T. ATMs ready to serve you daily, day and night so you can claim your Superbilis Padala remittances!

METRO MANILA

December 20 (Sat)

9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
20th Ave.-P. Tuazon
Araneta Center

10:00 AM to 4:00 PM
Ortigas-Robinsons Galleria

10:30 AM to 4:30 PM
New Divisoria Market

12:00 NN to 6:00 PM
Divisoria Center

December 24 (Wed)

9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
Farmers Plaza

December 26 (Fri)

9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
EDSA-Cubao Aurora
El Cano
Head Office
Honorio Lopez Blvd.-Balut
North Bay Boulevard
Quiapo
Redemptorist-Baclaran
Sta. Monica-Novaliches
Sto. Cristo
Sto. Cristo-San Nicolas
Susano Rd.-Novaliches

12:00 PM to 6:00 PM
Ortigas-San Miguel Ave.

December 27 (Sat)

9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
New Divisoria Market

10:00 AM to 4:00 PM
Ortigas-Robinsons Galleria

January 2 (Fri)

9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
EDSA-Cubao Aurora
Head Office
Quiapo
Tutuban Centermall II

12:00 PM to 6:00 PM
Ortigas-San Miguel Ave.

January 3 (Sat)

9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
Divisoria Center
McArthur Highway-Malinta

LUZON

December 20 (Sat)

9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
Baguio-Bonifacio
Bauan, Batangas
Calamba-Parian
Carmen, Pangasinan
Ilagan
La Union-Main
Legaspi-Mabini
Lucena-Main
San Pablo-Regidor
Santiago-City Road
-Tayug-Pangasinan
Urdaneta-Pangasinan

December 24 (Wed)

9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
Apalit
Nasugbu, Batangas
Rosario, Batangas

December 26 (Fri)

9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
Legazpi-Rizal
Tabaco

December 27 (Sat)

9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
Agoo, La Union
Baguio-Cariño
Baguio-Magsaysay
Baguio-Session
Balanga, Bataan
Balayan, Batangas
Bangued, Abra
Batac, Ilocos Norte
Benguet-La Trinidad
Calamba-Real
Calapan
Candon
Cauayan
Dagupan-Fernandez
Dagupan-Perez
Iriga, Camarines Sur
La Union-M.L. Quezon
Laoag-Gen. Segundo
Laoag-Rizal
Lipa-Ayala
Lucena-Red V
Marilao-Bulacan
Occidental Mindoro
Olongapo
Santiago-Main
Solano
Tuguegarao-Luna
Vigan

December 28 (Sun)

9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
Tanauan

December 31 (Wed)

9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
Dagupan-Main
San Carlos-Pangasinan
San Pablo-Maharlika

January 2 (Fri)

9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
Batangas-Main
Batangas-Kumintang Ilaya
Dinalupihan, Bataan
Guagua
Hagonoy, Bulacan
Iba, Zambales
Naga-Gen. Luna
Occidental Mindoro
Palawan
San Miguel, Bulacan
Tanauan

January 3 (Sat)

9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
Aparri
Baguio-Magsaysay
Cauayan
Lemery, Batangas
Lipa-B. Morada
Tabaco
Vigan

VISAYAS

December 26 (Fri)

9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
Ormoc

December 27 (Sat)

9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
Antique
Cebu-Lincoln
Iloilo-Delgado
Roxas

January 2 (Fri)

9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
Bacolod-Araneta
Bacolod-Capitol
Bacolod-Gatuslao
Bacolod-Gonzaga
Bacolod-Lacson
Bacolod-Libertad
Bacolod-North Drive
Bacolod-Singcang
Cebu-Tabunok
Ormoc
Silay

January 3 (Sat)

9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
Bacolod-Sixth
Cebu-Downtown Center
Cebu-Lincoln
Cebu-Taboan

January 4 (Sun)

9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
Roxas-Burgos

MINDANAO

December 26 (Fri)

9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
Cagayan de Oro-Main

December 27 (Sat)

9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
Dipolog-Gen. Luna
Pagadian-Rizal
Pagadian-Sta. Lucia
Zamboanga-Brillantes
Zamboanga-Galleria
Zamboanga-Gov. Lim
Zamboanga-Jaldon
Zamboanga-Veterans

January 2 (Fri)

9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
Cagayan de Oro - Main
Davao-Agdao
Davao-Bajada
Davao-Bankerohan
Davao-Buhangin
Davao-Center
Davao-Doctors
Davao-Ecoland
Davao-Matina
Davao-Monteverde
Davao-Panabo
Davao-R. Castillo
Davao-Rizal
Davao-Roxas
Davao-San Pedro
Davao-Sta. Ana
Davao-Tagum
Davao-Toril
Digos
Gen. Santos-Makar
Gen. Santos-P. Acharon
Gen. Santos-Pioneer
Gen. Santos-Santiago Blvd.

January 3 (Sat)

9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
Basilan
Dipolog-Gen. Luna
Ozamis-Burgos
Ozamis-Rizal
Pagadian-Rizal
Pagadian-Sta. Lucia
Zamboanga-Brillantes
Zamboanga-Galleria
Zamboanga-Gov. Lim
Zamboanga-Jaldon
Zamboanga-Veterans

You're in good hands with METROBANK

Over 800 domestic and international branches, offices, and subsidiaries.
Head Office: Metrobank Plaza, Sen. Gil J. Puyat Ave., Makati City; Web Page: www.metrobank.com.ph E-mail: metrobank@metrobank.com.ph
Member of the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation. Deposits insured up to ₱100,000.00 per depositor.

A proud member of BancNet

13 killed in coordinated rebel attacks in Iraq

AN IRAQI mother lies next to her injured son at a hospital in the city of Karbala, some 110 km south of Baghdad, following a string of attacks on coalition forces on Dec. 27.

REUTERS

KARBALA, Iraq—In the biggest rebel attack since the Dec. 13 capture of Saddam Hussein, suicide bombers and assailants with mortars and grenade launchers blasted coalition military bases and the governor's office in the southern city of Karbala. Six coalition soldiers, six Iraqi police officers and a civilian died.

At least 172 people, many of them civilians caught in the chaos, were injured Saturday in the nearly simultaneous assaults that appeared designed to test the resolve of Washington's allies in the coalition governing Iraq. A Polish-led force is responsible for security around the holy Shiite city of Karbala, and four Bulgarian troops and two Thai soldiers died.

Insurgents might also have targeted Karbala, south of Baghdad, on the assumption that military targets there would be more vulnerable to attack. The most intense rebel activity is in Sunni areas west and north of Baghdad, where combat-tested American troops have more experience fending off suicide bombers and other assailants.

One of four suicide bombers in Karbala gained entry to a Bulgarian camp, cutting through roadblocks in a car and destroying a building where the headquarters of the unit was located, Bulgarian Deputy Defense Minister Ilko Dimitrov said in Sofia.

Four Bulgarian soldiers were killed and 27 others were wounded, Dimitrov said.

"We expected these attacks because Karbala was suspiciously peaceful in the recent time," said Nikola Kolev, the Bulgarian Army chief of staff. "We improved security measures every day but terrorists change their tactics all the time."

Bulgaria, a staunch supporter of the US military campaign in Iraq, has a 485-member light infantry battalion stationed under Polish command.

A car bomb also killed two Thai soldiers on guard duty when the vehicle rammed into their camp's wall, a Thai spokesperson said in Bangkok. Thailand sent 422 soldiers to Iraq in September to provide medical aid and help rebuild war-shattered infrastructure.

The Thais had been confident enough about their security that they planned to send 200 Thai civilians to visit their troops. A Thai newspaper, The Nation, said the tourists would travel with senior military officials in February. In the wake of the attacks, it wasn't clear whether the plan would go ahead.

Six Iraqi police officers and an Iraqi woman living next to one of the military bases were killed in Karbala, said Ali al-Arzawi, deputy director of the General Hospital. Some 135 Iraqi civilians and police officers also were wounded, many of them lightly, he said.

In Baghdad, US Army Brig. Gen. Mark Kimmitt said a total of 37 coalition soldiers, including five Americans, were injured.

"It was a coordinated, massive attack planned on a big scale and intended to do much harm," Polish Maj. Gen. Andrzej Tyszkiewicz said from his headquarters at Camp Babylon, east of Karbala. Poland commands a multinational force of 9,500 soldiers, including 2,400 Poles.

After the attacks, US troops sealed off the debris-strewn area around the governor's office. Three destroyed cars lay in the street. At the hospital, crying people crowded the corridors, searching for missing family members.

"I was in the front office when I heard a loud explosion," Wahab Abdel Hussain, a 45-year-old desk officer at the governor's office, said from his hospital bed. "Shattered glass hit me in the face and then I passed out. I woke up in the hospital."

As Abdel Hussain spoke, blood ran down his face. His family sat nearby.

Mohamed Jassim, 50, said he was about to enter the governor's office to try to settle a land dispute when a car bomb exploded, injuring his hand.

"I was knocked out on the floor by the explosion," he said. He blamed supporters of Saddam, whose arrest was a major victory for US troops, although American commanders believe the insurgency is a loose-knit organization without a rigid command and control structure. *AP*

Thailand vows to keep forces in Iraq

BANGKOK, Thailand—Thailand's prime minister vowed Sunday to keep his nation's troops in Iraq despite calls from the opposition for a withdrawal following the death of two Thai soldiers—the first fatalities among its noncombatant force in Iraq.

The two dead troops were on guard duty when a car rammed the wall of their camp in the southern Iraqi city of Karbala and exploded on Saturday, Thai officials said.

"We will continue to work for humanitarian ends ... The next batch of troops are preparing and making themselves ready. They are ready to go to Iraq as scheduled. Nobody has changed their mind, their morale is still good," Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra told reporters.

He said the two slain soldiers were "brave," standing guard even after military officials received intelligence reports suggesting there would be an attack. Thaksin did not elaborate.

"We honor them and will take good care of their families. They will be compensated," he added.

The deaths of the two soldiers received front-page attention in Thailand's media on Sunday. The Nation daily reported that Thai military commanders held an emergency meeting late Saturday after hearing the news.

Army spokesperson Col. Somkuan Saengpataraneth said he believed the two dead were the first Thai soldiers to be killed on an overseas battlefield since the Vietnam War.

The chair of the Senate foreign relations committee, Kraisak Choonhavan, a strong opponent of Thailand's decision to deploy troops to Iraq, said Thai soldiers were not safe there and should not have to "sacrifice their lives for nothing."

"I have called several other senators who have supported my idea of making another request to the government to withdraw from Iraq," he told reporters. "It is the time for the government to review its position on the remaining troops in Iraq."

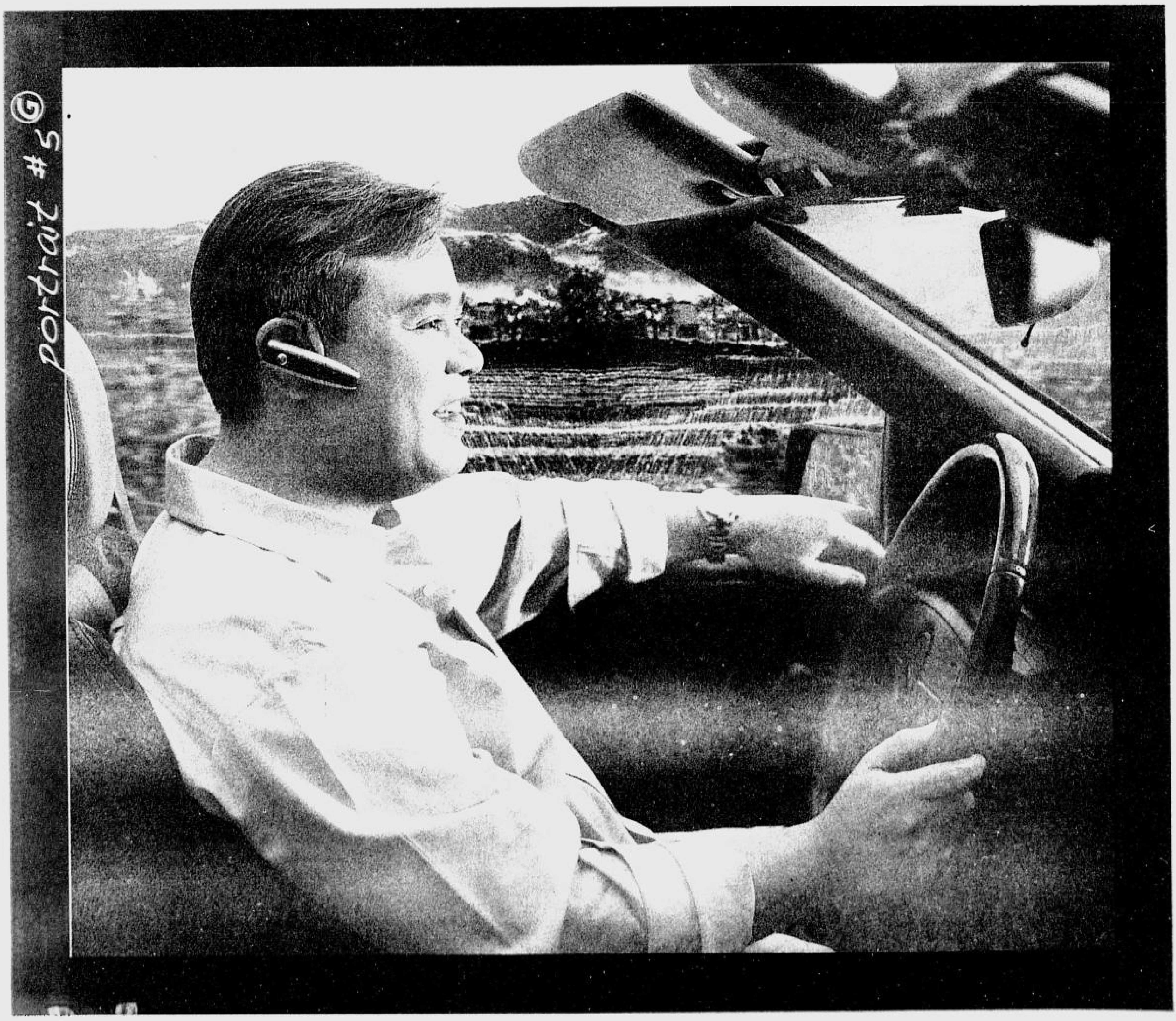
Following the Thai decision to deploy troops to Iraq, US President George W. Bush in October awarded Thailand non-Nato ally status, opening the door to priority in military aid. A withdrawal of Thai troops from Iraq could upset Washington and jeopardize that deal.

Thaksin said Bush telephoned him early Sunday to send his condolences to the families of the killed soldiers and to praise the bravery of Thai troops in Iraq.

Thailand's chief of military civilian affairs, Lt. Gen. Pisanu Urailert, said that the Army was not discussing the possibility of withdrawing its troops and that Thai soldiers would "continue to carry out their humanitarian work . . . as assigned by the government."

"At this moment we are talking about introducing more precautionary measures to prevent or deter such kinds of car bomb attacks. We have orders to erect more barriers on the road that leads to the camp," he said.

The car bombs were detonated by remote control, he said, without elaborating. *AP*



WORLDBRIEFS

N. Korea open to talks again

SEOUL—North Korea has confirmed that it is willing to hold talks with the United States and five other nations early next year on ending its nuclear weapons program. A top Chinese diplomat met with North Korean officials on Dec. 25-27, and the North's official news agency, KCNA, said Saturday that both sides agreed to set up a second round of the six-nation negotiations. "Both sides ... expressed their willingness to make appropriate preparations so that talks can resume at an early date next year to continue the process for a peaceful solution to the nuclear issue," KCNA quoted a North Korean foreign ministry spokesperson as saying. The United States, China, Japan, Russia and the two Koreas held a first round of talks on North Korea's nuclear development in Beijing in August. The meetings ended without much progress or an agreement on a date for new talks. *AP*

Protest over Taiwan labor laws

TAIPEI—More than 200 foreign laborers, some complaining of physical abuse by employers, protested in Taipei on Sunday to demand better working conditions. The workers, mostly from Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand, unfurled banners that read "Don't Ignore Migrant Workers' Contribution, Protect their Human Rights." Many of the protesters work at private homes caring for the elderly and sick and are forced to work long hours for no extra money, said Wang Wen-shiou, a Taiwanese protest organizer. Wang said some endure continued physical abuse because Taiwanese law bans them from switching employers. *AP*

Runner-up crowned Miss Taiwan

TAIPEI—Kao Ching-hui was crowned Miss Taiwan on Sunday, two days after she tearfully denied allegations she had worked at a hostess bar, which the contest bans because of their links to prostitution. Kao, the first runner-up at the Miss Taiwan beauty pageant in July, replaced winner Liu An-nan, who went into hiding reportedly because loan sharks had chased her over a large debt. A smiling Kao, 25, posed for pictures in a white traditional Chinese gown Sunday after being offered a pearl crown and a red sash as Miss Taiwan. *AP*

2 China solons axed for graft

BEIJING—Two delegates to China's top parliamentary body have been dismissed for bribery, with one found to have paid off constituents at a lower-level congress during his election to the higher level, state press reported Sunday. The dismissal from the National People's Congress (NPC) of Chen Mansheng of central Hunan province prompted immediate calls from a Hong Kong-based rights group for the resignation of those who accepted the bribes. According to Xinhua news agency, Chen and Yan Liangzhong of Sichuan province were formally dismissed by a just-concluded meeting of the NPC standing committee on Saturday. Yan was dismissed for accepting bribes as the former mayor of Neijing City. *AFP*

12 Aceh guerrillas killed

BANDA ACEH, Indonesia—The Indonesian military, eight months into a campaign to wipe out rebels in Aceh province, announced the deaths of 12 more guerrilla fighters on Sunday. The military says about 1,200 Free Aceh Movement (GAM) rebels have been killed since the beginning of the operation in May. In the latest clashes, troops shot dead three rebels at Gandapura, Bireuen, on Saturday. Another three were killed in Peusangan, Bireuen district, later on Saturday, while members of the elite Kopassus corps shot dead another two suspected rebels in the hill region of Ujung Pancu in Aceh Besar shortly before noon. Another suspected GAM rebel was killed in a shoot-out in Trumon, South Aceh district, around noon the same day, he said. *Reuters*

Credit card charged to Arafat

JERUSALEM—Police nabbed two alleged swindlers in northern Israel who had knocked out hundreds of fake credit cards, including one in the name of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, the Yediot Aharonot reported Sunday. Invoices totaling thousands of shekels were addressed to the Muqataa, Arafat's headquarters in the West Bank town of Ramallah, where he has been confined for the last two years, the daily said. Two men in their late 30s from the town of Afula now face charges. *AFP*

Hard choice for Serbs in polls

BELGRADE, Serbia-Montenegro—Serbs had the choice Sunday of voting Slobodan Milosevic's allies into power, with a risk of returning to international isolation, or backing pro-democracy parties that ousted the authoritarian leader but failed to fulfill voters' expectations.

About 6.5 million people were eligible to cast ballots in elections for Serbia's 250-member parliament. The voting was crucial for the stability of the republic and the whole of the Balkans, still recovering from four wars fomented by Milosevic and his loyalists in the 1990s.

Polls opened at 0600 GMT and were to close 13 hours later. Preliminary results were expected before midnight.

In a sign that the nationalism that led to those wars is on the upswing again, a key Milosevic ally, the extreme nationalist Serbian Radical Party, was predicted to win most votes among the 19 parties or coalitions and more than 4,000 candidates on the ballot.

Moreover, the list of candidates included Milosevic, Radical Party leader Vojislav Seselj, and two more war crimes suspects charged by the UN tribunal in The Hague, Netherlands, which is trying Milosevic and others deemed responsible for the atrocities of the Balkan wars.

The main issue is whether the Radical party—which advocates expanding Serbia's borders at the expense of its neighbors and considers Saddam Hussein its chief international ally—will win a majority of votes, allowing it to form a government.

"We cannot say who will have the majority; this is no black-and-white situation," said Marko Blagojevic, an independent observer. "This will be a true competition."

According to pre-election opinion polls, the Radicals were expected to win about one quarter of the votes cast—the most of any single grouping—while three main pro-democracy parties could garner just over 50 percent. The rest would go to the minor players, including Milosevic's Socialists who were expected to win about 8 percent.

Although the three democratic groups—which all used to belong to the massive anti-Milosevic bloc that toppled the former president in 2000—could form the government together and sideline the Radicals, their constant bickering likely will stand in the way.

A key party in the bloc is the Democratic Party of Serbia led by Vojislav Kostunica, who succeeded Milosevic as president of Yugoslavia, Serbia-Montenegro's predecessor. He refuses to form an alliance with the now ruling Democratic Party, accusing it of corruption. The third pro-democracy ally, G 17-Plus, also has major disagreements with the ruling Democrats but is willing to cooperate with Kostunica.

On the other hand, if the Radicals win backing from the Socialists and other minor parties, they could end up gaining the needed majority—a scenario that would likely plunge Serbia deeper into social and economic chaos and destabilize the whole region. *AP*

600 lawyers offer services to Saddam

AMMAN—More than 600 lawyers have signed up to defend captive Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein, the head of Jordan's Bar Association told the Jordan Times newspaper on Sunday.

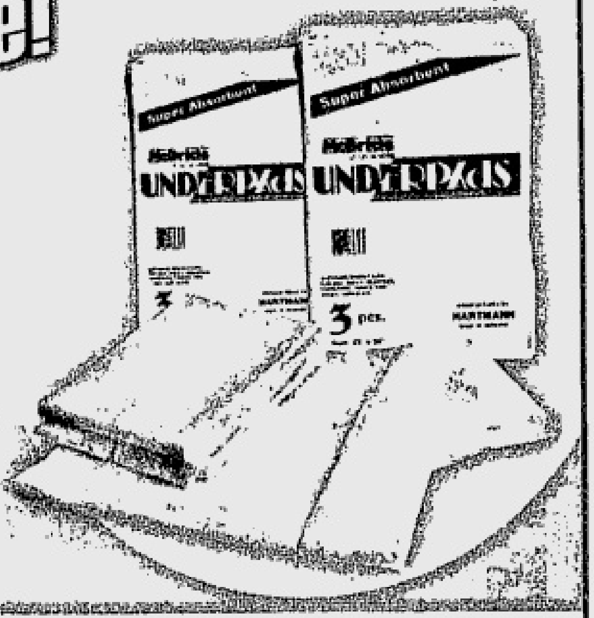
Hussein Mjalli said the volunteers had signed up at the association's offices in Amman and that by late Friday 600 lawyers indicated their readiness to be part of a defense team for the former president of Iraq.

"The intention is to form a higher committee for the defense of Saddam, one which will include legal experts from all over the world," Mjalli said.

The general secretariat of the Arab Lawyers' Union was meanwhile due to meet Sunday in Cairo to discuss plans for setting up the defense team, he added.

Earlier this month the Jordanian association sent letters to UN Secretary General Kofi Annan and Arab League chief Amr Mussa urging them to ensure that Saddam would be handed to a neutral country or the International Committee of the Red Cross.

The barristers have argued that Saddam should not be put on trial because "a head of state is immune from prosecution" and that in any case he should be protected from retribution by the United States. *AP*



The Ultimate in Comfort, Care & Hygiene!

MADE IN GERMANY
HARTMANN

McBride
Disposable Underpads

SUPERIOR PROTECTION FOR:
- Bed Sheets
- Beddings
- Furniture
- Chairs & other surfaces

Exclusively Distributed by:
Medical Center Trading Corp.
Pioneer St., Cor. Shaw Blvd., Pasig City
Tels.: 631-1715 • 631-9355 • 637-9504
Fax: (0632) 631-7869 • E-mail: medcen@info.com.ph

MANILA 711-8374
ILOILO (033) 320-1413
PAMPANGA (045) 961-7892
CEBU (032) 254-2367
DAVAO (082) 222-4404
PASIG 631-1715
LIPA (043) 757-2051

Available at mercury drug Stores Nationwide

Platinum. Your own rules.

Globe
PLATINUM
EDUARDO DE GUZMAN
VALID THRU
02/05

Eduardo de Guzman, EVP & COO, Skyfreight Forwarders

"In my business,
out of contact is
out of the question."

THE NEW GLOBE PLATINUM.
A spare SIM in every card, plus service handsets delivered to you. Just one way Globe Platinum gives you the value you deserve.

When you handle huge shipments every day, there's no room for downtime. With a spare SIM he can activate from anywhere, anytime, Globe Platinum member Ed de Guzman's always on top of his game. Even if he forgets or loses his phone, he can just call the Helpdesk -- and it's business as usual.

Exclusive 24-hour dedicated Platinum Helpdesk • Automatic roaming to more than 150 destinations • Priority service at Business Centers • New premium shopping, dining and leisure privileges

Experience Platinum for real. Call 730-1888 today.

Exclusively for Globe Handyphone subscribers with either:
- Average monthly usage of P4,000 and up (exclusive of adjustments and taxes) for the last 12 months
- A new subscription to the Platinum Plan (P5,000 MSF inclusive of VAT and CERA)

Membership to Globe Platinum is subject to internal screening processes.

Free Nokia 6600 and other premium handsets with the G-Plan opti-SIM when you subscribe to the Platinum Plan

making great things possible Globe HANDYPHONE

ISSN 0116-2642 INQUIRER Vol. 19 No. 21

Email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph website: http://www.inq7.net

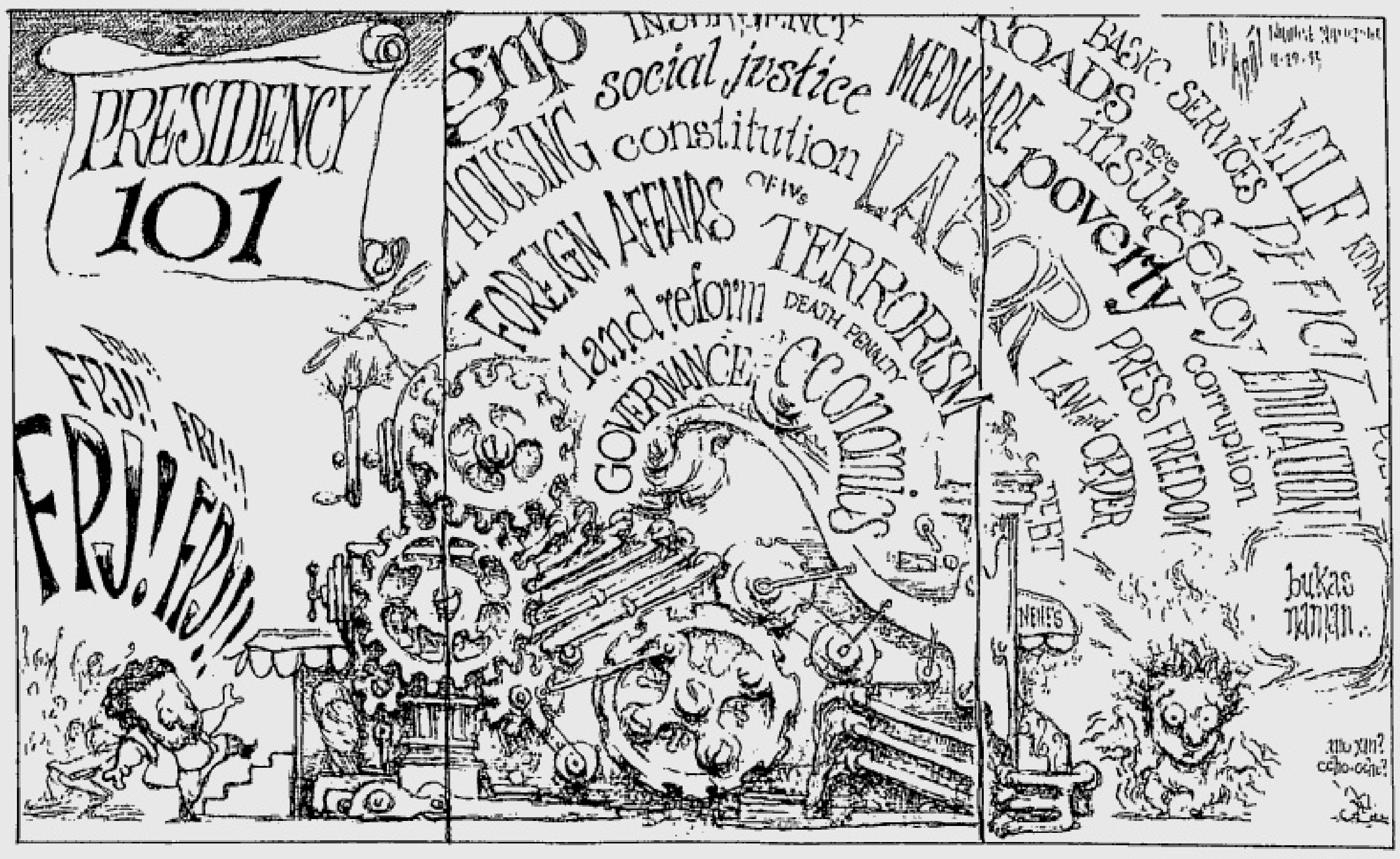
OPINION

The Philippine Daily Inquirer, Inc. has its business and editorial offices at
•Chino Roces Ave corner Yague and Mascardo Sts., Makati City
•P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office 1263 Makati City
•Our telephone numbers are 897-8808 connecting all departments
•Editorial Fax 897-4793 / 897-4794 •Advertising 897-4807
•Circulation 527-3342 / 527-3348 / 528-0183 / 528-0186 and 528-0213 / Fax: 528-02-34.

Publisher **Isagani Yambot**
Editor in Chief **Letty Jimenez-Magsanoc**
Managing Editor **Jose Ma. D. Nolasco**
Associate Editor **Abelardo S. Ulanday**
News Editor **Artemio T. Engracia Jr.** • *Chief, News Day Desk* **Nilo B. Paurom**
Opinion Editor **Jorge V. Aruta**
National Editor **Pergentino B. Bandayrel Jr.**
City Editor **Gerry Lirio**
Senior Desk Editor **Rosario A. Garcellano**
Editorial Consultant **Amando Doronila**
Chief Photographer **Ernie U. Sarmiento**
Art & Design Director **Lynett A. Villariba**

Board Chairman **Marixi R. Prieto**
President **Alexandra Prieto-Romualdez**
Senior Vice President for Sales and Marketing **Renato R. Reinoso**
Senior Vice President for Corporate Services **David O. Valdes**
VP for Advertising **Felipe R. Olarte**
AVP for Circulation **Gloria P. Lardizabal**

All rights reserved. Except as permitted by law, no part of the Philippine Daily Inquirer may be reproduced or distributed in any form or by any means stored in a database or retrieval system without its prior written permission.



For shame

EDITORIAL

THE RESIDENTS of San Francisco in Southern Leyte have had to endure two calamities in the last two weeks: the rain-triggered mudslides that claimed almost 200 lives throughout the province just before Christmas, and the man-made disaster that afflicts us the whole year round, and from which there seems to be no respite, called politicking.

Partisan politics reared its monstrous head when local politicians quarreled over the distribution of relief goods. They fought for credit, with one politician even stamping Christmas greetings on the aid packages. "Attribution," as Social Welfare Secretary Dinky Soliman defined the problem, is familiar and contemptible, but hardly life-threatening.

The INQUIRER has learned, however, that Rep. Aniceto Saludo had caused a delay in the distribution, because he wanted the relief goods to be coursed through his political ally, the town mayor. In providing assistance to victims who have lost everything, even an hour's delay is unconscionable. A hold-up for credit-grabbing purposes should be punished with outright disqualification from public office.

But Saludo has denied the report, accusing his arch-rival, Gov. Rosette Lerias, of spreading the rumors because of the coming elections. It was Lerias, he said, who maneuvered to have the relief goods distributed through her allies, led by the vice mayor. "If somebody was politicking, it was them," Saludo said.

But if packs of relief goods at a San Francisco parish office are any evidence, the congressman himself had already politicized the calamity assistance program. The packs bore stickers that read, "Malipayong Pasko [Merry Christmas] through the effort of Representative Aniceto Saludo."

Saludo maintained that the items had been prepared long before the tragedy struck. "Of course, it is Christmas so we should place ... Merry Christmas," he said. ""That explained why there was a sticker on the package. Why, should we remove the stickers so we would not be accused of politicking?"

It did not seem to occur to him that the answer to his own question is, or should have been, yes. *Delicadeza* is a forgotten virtue among politicians, but even the most politically inept know that, in times of calamity, politicians must be seen to observe the virtue scrupulously. Nobody wants to be seen as an opportunist making political capital out of other people's misfortune.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has waded into the mud, both literally and figuratively. After visiting the stricken areas in still-inclement weather, she chided the politicians bickering over their role in the distribution of the relief goods. "Let us not turn human tragedies into political opportunities," Ms Macapagal said in a press statement. "Let us focus on sincere and selfless efforts to alleviate the plight of the victims."

As head of state, Ms Macapagal was surely right to put the politicians in their place. And yet who can forget that she is also the head of an administration that is also adept at turning almost anything into political opportunity?

The President has shown up in an AIDS concert beside American pop star Mandy Moore; she has made herself available for an unexpected courtesy call by a member of the popular F4 group from Taiwan (a visit arranged, not coincidentally, by First Gentleman Mike Arroyo). She has visited numerous victims of terrorism or natural calamities, personally distributing cash envelopes to the bereaved. She continues to tolerate the practice (begun in Ramos' time and continued under Estrada's) of naming public works projects and government programs after presidential initials.

Her apologists may say Ms Macapagal is no worse than others, that her ceremonial duties must not be confused with her responsibilities as a re-electionist politician, that the law actually requires government projects to identify, on site, those public officials responsible for their funding. But the sad truth is, there is a direct line between the President's own political practice and those relief goods stamped, indecently, with Christmas-inspired greetings.

Press releases won't prevent mayhem

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

I AM not a fortune teller, but I can predict what's going to happen day after tomorrow and what the news will be the day after. The hospital emergency rooms will be full of injured people, on account of which doctors and interns will be overworked. There will be a few fires. There may be one or two explosions, caused not by terrorists but by careless workers in a firecracker factory or by a cache of pyrotechnic devices. There will be several deaths and amputations of fingers and toes injured beyond saving by firecracker blasts. The deaths will be caused by the fires, by stray bullets, and by stabbings during fights among inebriated New Year's Eve celebrators. After midnight, the streets and yards will be full of smoke and the smell of gunpowder as though they were in a war zone.

What's going to happen are so predictable that reporters in a hurry to get the job done and go home can write the stories in advance with only the names, numbers and places missing, to be filled in later. Readers can expect what photographs will be in the newspapers the next day: those of children and foolish adults grimacing in pain as doctors treat their blasted hands in hospital emergency rooms. And firemen and victims trying to put out fires.

I can also predict the press releases that will be issued by the Philippine National Police and by the Department of Health: Don't fire your guns and refrain from exploding firecrackers on New Year's Eve. And as sure as the sun will rise the next day, few will heed the warnings and there will be many newly-maimed individuals to greet the New Year.

All this mayhem will be caused by one device invented by man (historians give the credit to the Chinese) called the "firecracker." The first firecrackers were small, cigarette-sized ones that were comparatively safe. But like the arms race among world powers, they became bigger and more powerful, some so powerful they can amputate fingers and even kill.

Reasoning that customers want bigger firecrackers with louder blasts, greedy Filipino firecracker manufacturers made more lethal devices in order to sell more. They have colorful names like Super Lolo, Pla-Pla, Bawang, Baby Dynamite, Sawa, etc., but they have one thing in common: they can injure, blind, cut off fingers and toes, even kill. Some of them have the power of a small hand grenade.

They are also illegal. But manufacturers make thousands of them openly. They are also sold in the open. Drive down the Bulacan highway and you can buy all the illegal pyrotechnics from the makeshift stores lining it. The police see them, but they don't do anything. Sometimes they will seize a cache for press release purposes, some of which will be sold to customers on the sly by the policemen themselves.

Provincial, city and municipal governments and their police forces are supposed to enforce the rules on the manufacture of pyrotechnics. They will swear to high heavens that they do. But if they really do, how do these hundreds of thousands of illegal explosives get made and sold?

The only explanation is that local government and police officials are negligent or, worse, are being bribed.

Year after year, the same rigmarole happens. Illegal firecrackers injure hundreds of innocent children and knowing but foolish adults; some of them are disabled for life. All because they wanted to greet the New Year with plenty of explosions and noise. What is supposed to be a happy celebration turns out to be a tragic occasion for some families.

Not only the manufacturers should bear the guilt but also the corrupt officials who did not do their duty to enforce the law against illegal pyrotechnics. It happens so often and so regularly that the people take it for granted. Except the victims. They are foolish in the first place, but their lost limbs and lost eyesight are gone forever and there's nothing they can do about it. Except perhaps sue the manufacturers—if they can trace them.

Why not? If you can sue the person who fired the wayward bullet that hit you (if you can trace him), why not the manufacturer of the firecrackers that injured you? I think that is one way we can prevent manufacturers from turning out the illegal firecrackers that maim.

Mere press releases warning the manufacturers won't stop them. Warning the people not to explode firecrackers won't stop them either. For as long as the dangerous firecrackers are available, people will buy them. And for as long as there is a demand for these, manufacturers will make them.

There are laws against making these dangerous pyrotechnics but, as stated earlier, they are not being enforced. Those who are supposed to enforce them should be charged with negligence by the Department of Interior and Local Government, but DILG officials are just as negligent.

Ironically, if the manufacturers will make only the safe firecrackers, they will sell more and earn more because then the public will not be afraid of them anymore, knowing they are safe. If they make the cigarette-sized ones in packs of 30 or 50, like they do in Hong Kong, China and Taiwan, sales will be bigger and faster because the crackers are exploded not singly but in rapid-fire fashion like machine guns.

But our manufacturing methods are primitive. That is why pyrotechnics factories explode now and then, killing some of their workers. Yet sending a group of Filipino manufacturers to Hong Kong, China or Taiwan to study their methods will teach them not only to make safer pyrotechnics but also to make their products exportable.

Lessons

There's the Rub

Conrado de Quiros

EVELYN Kilayko, head of the Concerned Women of the Philippines, says she favors former President Joseph Estrada being allowed to go to the United States for an operation for his arthritic knees. Erap, she says, has suffered enough for more than two years. "As Christians, we must practice charity, especially now with love in the air," she adds.

Well, at the very least the problem with that, as Dr. Kristin Trenas, convenor of Plunder-Watch-Panay points out, is that it is totally unnecessary. This country does not lack for experts who can just as well restore Erap's knees to as far as they can be restored, given the ravages he and Blue Label have wreaked on them. I can personally vouch for that, having caught a glimpse of the disease. At an advanced stage, the alcohol dries up the liquids in the knee (and elbow) sockets making movement difficult. Imagine the pistons of a car engine without oil, and you'll have a good idea of the affliction. The brain drain notwithstanding, which has despoiled the medical profession more than others, we still have doctors who are as good as, if not better, than their counterparts in the United States, Filipino or American.

More than that, as Jeffrey Celiz of Bayan-Panay points out, the seemingly "humanitarian act" reeks of opportunism. He says the Sandiganbayan, which authorized Erap's trip to the United States, has become a tool to salvage GMA's dismal chances at the polls next year.

Rep. Prospero Pichay counters that GMA has been charitable to Erap from the start and doesn't need to woo the Erap horde because she is already assured of 30 percent of next year's votes, being the incumbent. Well, Pichay probably got his statistics from the same source he got his estimates of the threat al-Qaida poses in this country. He may want to know that in informal surveys of government offices, GMA often finishes third or lower. As to GMA being charitable to Erap from Day One, that is true, but simply because she has been campaigning for another term from Day One.

I did say before that what was wrong with this effort at charity or reconciliation is that it misses the point of charity or reconciliation. It is misdirected. It is not Erap—and the Marcoses, their cronies, and the other plunderers and murderers GMA has offered to forgive—who need charity, it is the people. It is not Erap—and everybody else GMA means to embrace—who needs reconciling with, it is the people. You want to show charity to the people, you want to reconcile with the people, you punish their oppressors, not forgive them or forget them. While at that, what right has GMA to do any forgiving or forgetting? She was just put there by the people through an exercise of their power. Hers is clearly not a case of, "as Christians we must practice charity, especially now with love in the air," it is a case of "as a presidential wannabe, I must practice subterfuge, especially now with elections in the air."

Having said this, however, I myself am not particularly implacable about keeping Erap where he is. My reason for this has little to do with Christmas. At the very least, it is pragmatic. The longer he is confined in his five-star detention cell, the more he looks aggrieved. And the more he is likely to get sympathy from the public, which will translate as more votes for the so-called opposition, so-called because they are opposed only to having lost power and want to get it back.

But more than the pragmatic reason, there is the moral one. Erap's incarceration has lost its point, or it is teaching the wrong lesson. I was one of those who hailed Erap's arrest and incarceration as a triumph of decency, quite apart from justice. I said then that it was going to be our version of South Korea's prosecution and jailing of a couple of past presidents who robbed its people blind. I said then that it would, or should, reopen investigation of past cases of plunder—notably those wreaked by the Marcoses and their cronies, chief of them Danding Cojuangco—and produce the same results. I said then that, as a result of this, it would put the fear of God or Gloria on future leaders: Henceforth, they would think twice before they stole.

None of this has happened. Imelda and Danding have not only not been jailed, they have been free to mount brazen iniquity once more. Cojuangco, in particular, has managed to get his boys at the House of Representatives to try to impeach Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. for corruption. Unbelievable, but true, the blind leading the seeing, the ungodly judging the godly. *Onli in da Pilipins.* More than that, GMA herself has not only mounted a similar regime of corruption, she has committed nearly an identical crime. Or her husband has, which must reflect on her rule, at the very least by command responsibility. What is the difference between Erap signing "Jose Velarde" and Mike Arroyo signing "Jose Pidal"? Yet Erap fell on the strength of Clarissa Ocampo's damning testimony in that regard and GMA is still there.

All Erap's incarceration is saying now is not that if you commit a crime, you will be punished, but that if you are stupid, you will be punished. It is not that if you steal, you will be jailed, it is that if you are caught, you will be jailed. It is not a lesson in crime and punishment, it is a lesson in avoiding crudeness or being found out. Justice is universal or it is not justice at all. Selective justice is not justice, it is injustice. Imelda, Danding, Lucio Tan, Gloria, Mike Arroyo, and even arguably Fidel Ramos and Cory, or her *kamaganak*, are not in jail. Only Erap is. There is something askew in that, which the "Edsa III" legions have every reason to rail against.

It doesn't tell leaders to be honest, it merely tells them to be careful. What kind of lesson is that?

China conquers US through its goods

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

SEATTLE—We called up Speaker Jose de Venecia last Christmas Day to greet him happy birthday (he turned 67) and the first thing he asked was, "Is it snowing in Seattle?" Unfortunately, for this bunch of visiting Pinoys in search of a white Christmas, the weather in downtown Seattle has come close to freezing point, but it will get warmer in no time. To chase some real snow, our niece, Christiana C. Angulo, brought us to the Snoqualmie Ski Resort, about 80 km southeast of Seattle and at an elevation of about 4,500 ft, where snow fell hard all through Saturday, blanketing everything in white. It was truly postcard pretty.

* * *

There was no snow in downtown Seattle, only rain. But judging from my conversation with the Speaker, political activities are snowballing back home as the Jan. 5 deadline for filing of certificates of candidacy nears. Queried on how things were politically, JDV admitted that exploratory talks were going on regarding the choice of a vice-presidential candidate for Lakas, as well as between some people in President Macapagal-Arroyo's camp and those of candidates Raul Roco and even Fernando Poe Jr. on a possible team-up. Things should clear up within the next few days, said JDV.

* * *

He said Lakas is busy firming up its candidates for all the elective posts, but the trouble is that in virtually all areas, several Lakas people are vying for the same posts. Those who will not be picked will probably end up in the other camps, but that's how it is every election: you win some, lose some. My only hope is that ultimately, all the politicians will realize the need to return to the two-party system that we used to have, instead of the current expensive and messy multi-party system that's politically weakening because the winner of the presidential race invariably fails to muster a majority.

De Venecia opined that GMA is scoring pretty well in her anti-terrorism campaign, with the checkpoints to and from various entries into the metropolis helping lower the crime rate, including kidnapping for ransom. He also noted that the anti-drug campaign has yielded some very spectacular results.

* * *

Shopping for Christmas is a universal activity, but I suppose this phenomenon is felt in the US more than anywhere else because its economy is highly consumer-oriented, and runs mainly on the strength of consumer-spending. Everything here is geared to make the consumer spend and spend, from the fabled discounts and now the year-end clearance sales, to the various credit card schemes. The mad pre-Christmas shopping seems to get madder after Christmas, as department stores launch clearance sales to make way for the new year's stocks.

* * *

What struck me is the incredible way Chinese goods have flooded US malls. Everything seems to be made in China, and I mean just about everything, from gadgets to apparel to kitchenware and home décor. I recall that years ago, American-made Christmas décor used to be a kind of cottage industry, turning out creative homemade pieces that were unique and therefore a bit expensive. But precisely because of their price and beauty, these items were treasured by buyers for years. Now Christmas décor is turned out by tens of thousands of Chinese hands in factory assembly lines all over China, for sale halfway around the world. On Christmas morning, as the Cunanan relatives opened gifts, we all got a good laugh as we noticed that just about everything exchanged was made in China.

* * *

The world's only superpower seems to have surrendered to Chinese imports, which explains the huge imbalance in trade between the two countries. US officials have tried to persuade China to buy more exports from the US to rectify the situation, but they could not push it too hard since the US is counting on China to help rein in North Korea's intransigence vis-à-vis its nuclear bomb program. China has sponsored the conference of six or seven nations, which included the US, Japan and South Korea, to discuss options that can be offered to North Korea in return for discontinuing its nuclear program.

* * *

American as well as other foreign goods are losing out to China-made goods because of their high quality and, by US standards, their dirt-cheap prices. My sister-in-law and our host on this Christmas visit to Oregon, Julie C. Angulo, a professional floral designer who works part-time in a flower shop in Beaverton, outside Portland, observes that Chinese-made Christmas decorations and silk flowers have come a long way. The shop where she works used to import its baskets from the Philippines, but ultimately gave them up for cheaper and better-made baskets from China (apparently they have good quality control there). By contrast, she notes that RP exports are of good quality only in initial orders, but ultimately they deteriorate. This is perhaps largely because Filipino manufacturers sacrifice quality in their hurry to recover investments.

In Seattle, some very good quality RP-made baskets and apparel have found their way to high-end boutiques, but there are only a few of these items. Indian goods come a far second to Chinese goods.

* * *

Many realize that the reason Chinese goods are so cheap is that Chinese workers are paid low wages. "They work in sweat shops back there," said one American. In addition, labor conditions in China are stable because there are no strikes there, unlike in the Western countries and even in the Philippines. This is why there is a rush of multinational manufacturers to China, propelling its phenomenal economic growth.

Retrospect

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Carlos Isagani T. Zarate

DURING a trip to my hometown of General Santos City for the traditional family gathering on Christmas Eve, telltale signs of the election season were unmistakably everywhere.

The two-and-half-hour trip from Davao City to the country's "tuna capital," can never be boring as one counts and mentally records the expensive posters of politicians, ostensibly extending to the populace good tidings for the season, that are unabashedly hung from almost every street lamppost. Next to the posters, the second very common campaign device is the glossy calendar, particularly pocket-sized ones, which supporters distribute in bus terminals and eateries that dot the highway.

But mostly, these obvious early campaigning receive some apathetic response from people, who would rather wish, I suppose, that the poster or calendar be instead converted to cash and distributed to them.

Indeed, for many who celebrated Christmas the general feeling was, it is enough *"na nakaraos din,"* aptly reflecting their resignation to the current state of our economy.

While it is not surprising for these politicians to maximize every opportunity available to score "*pa*-pogi and *pa-guapa*" points with the people, one can only desire that they do this with some finesse and *delicadeza*. For example, during the traditional Misa de Gallo and during the Christmas Day Masses, politicos who in the past years shied away from being seen in public were suddenly visible, waving to each and everyone, while smiling from ear to ear. Yet the most repulsive among these lot are those who cannot resist the temptation of advertising their names even in the face of grave tragedies, like those in Southern Leyte and other parts of Visayas and Mindanao. Donated bags of goodies were plastered with the names of these politicos.

To these *trapos*, we can only say: *Tama na! Sobra na! Palitan na!*

* * *

In retrospect, the year 2003 is but a continuing saga of unfulfilled promises for Mindanao. For one, the long-sought and peaceful resolution to the rebellion on the island is still very elusive. The stalled peace talks between the government and the MILF seem to have failed to take off. Endless charges and counter-charges apparently hamstring both panels. Despite repeated rebel denials, the government keeps on blaming the MILF of having links, directly or otherwise, with terrorists and bandit groups, like the Pentagon kidnap group and Jemaah Islamiyah. On the other hand, the MILF is charging the government of being controlled by hawks who will not settle for anything less than the total surrender and capitulation of the rebel group. It is not surprising then that many ordinary people affected by the conflict in Mindanao are already questioning the sincerity of both the government and the MILF in really forging a political and peaceful solution to the conflict.

Meanwhile, it seems that there will no longer be any reopening of talks between the government and the communist-led National Democratic Front (NDF). The NDF apparently is more likely to await the results of the next elections rather than negotiate with the administration that has worked hard to have some of its member organizations—the CPP and NPA—branded as "terrorist organizations" in the world community.

On the other hand, the way Mindanao became the so-called front in the "international war on terrorism" promoted by George W. Bush, is, for many peace advocates, lamentable. Like the occupation forces now stationed in Iraq, US forces have never left the island since the start of the "war games" in Basilan. The "visiting" US forces are seen everywhere: in Western Mindanao, Davao Region, Socsargen Area and Central Mindanao.

On top of this, Mindanao also became the arena of deadly bombings in 2003, the most deadly being the twin bombings of the Davao International Airport and the Sasa Wharf. The government created the Maniwang Commission to investigate the bombings, following the accusation of Magdalo soldiers that it was a covert government operation to sabotage the peace process. A church and civil society group in the meantime created the Truth Commission that also conducted its own separate and parallel investigation. Yet, up to now, the only thing clear is that the bombings were staged systematically to justify a scenario for whatever political purpose certain groups have in Mindanao.

The "anti-terrorism" mode sweeping over Mindanao has also resulted in many cases of forced displacement, disappearances, illegal arrests and summary executions of people suspected as "terrorists" or sympathizers. Sadly, these stories, unlike the sensational cases that happened in Manila, hardly got the attention, if they were not ignored completely, both by the mainstream media and the authorities.

* * *

Last Dec. 20, the 14th eaglet bred in captivity was hatched by the Philippine Eagle Foundation (PEF) at its breeding center located in the watershed area of Malagos, Calinan, Davao City. The yet-to-be-named eaglet, weighing 123 grams, is the eighth offspring of the prolific natural mates Jag and Ka Brianne. Their seventh was hatched on Jan. 6, 2003. The "birth" of this new eaglet may usher hope and pry our eyes open not only to the wisdom of conserving the near extinct Philippine eagle (*Pithecopaga jefferyi*), but also conserving our remaining natural resources.

To our readers, may we have a liberating 2004 and beyond!

* * *

Comments to karlos_z23@hotmail.com or kar_laws@yahoo.com

Rizal, excommunicated Mason and national hero

COMMENTARY

Dean Jorge Bocobo

RETRACTIONISTS can have some Christmas *consuelo de bobo*. I will grant them, in honor of Jose Rizal Day tomorrow, that he died a Catholic to marry the exquisite Josephine Bracken (whose dainty, 19th century slippers which I saw this year would have fit the elvish queen Arwen, but that's a different movie). Rizal lived as an excommunicated Mason—a status reaffirmed when the Masonic Temple reburied him at the Luneta in 1911, not the Jesuits, and the Catholic bishops damned all Masons to hell again, officially, in 1990. But our Rizal was a devastating writer, a doctor cauterizing society's disease with the fire of his pen, a farmer in far Dapitan's exile dreaming, a poet, a lover, a patriot and our cruelly murdered national hero. Tomorrow. Yet without Rizal the hero, who would believe that freedom of religion means anything to us?

"Religion" is found in the 1987 Bill of Rights which states: "No law shall be made respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. The free exercise and enjoyment of religious profession and worship, without discrimination or preference, shall forever be allowed. No religious test shall be required for the exercise of civil or political rights."

This is the famous "Separation of Church and State" which mandates government neutrality in matters of religion. Great public confusion surrounds this principle. It needs to be better explained.

First, the prohibitions of separation apply to the government itself and not to churches or religious leaders. Public officials are forbidden from either promoting "or" inhibiting religion. Private citizens are not; cardinals, imams, televangelists and the common *tao* are forever free to exercise and enjoy the religious profession and organized worship of their choice. Equal protection is given to Christians, Muslims, agnostics, atheists, Wiccans and Satanists. The government may not favor or discriminate among religions when spending the public's money. Thus Art VI Sec. 29 provides: "No public money or property shall be appropriated, applied, paid, or employed, directly or indirectly, for the use, benefit, or support of any sect, church, denomination, sectarian institution, or system of religion, or of any priest, preacher, minister, other religious teacher, or dignitary as such, except when such priest, preacher, minister, or dignitary is assigned to the armed forces, or to any penal institution, or government orphanage or leprosarium."

The Constitution insists that private theology is separate from public morals, that a common morality can survive contradictory religious beliefs. But enforcing neutrality implies that public officials must give up some of their own religious freedom when it comes to public acts and policies that affect "religion." Just as wealthy bankers must divest certain properties and give up some rights when they join the Cabinet, so too must public officials surrender their absolute religious freedom for the mantle of democratic leadership and service. In fact, JIL may have to pay taxes as a political party if Brother Eddie runs.

No one may serve in government who does not swear to defend the religious freedom of others, even if their deepest credos mock one's own. For example, a Catholic should not be in government if he cannot uphold the right of Muslims to hold that Jesus Christ was the son of a woman, Mary and a carpenter Joseph, not the Son of Allah, who needs no such weird biology, only the prophet Mohammed. As president you must defend the right of atheists to say that organized forms of worship are mostly based on the irrational popularity of powerful literary characters, like Yahweh and Jesus and El Shaddai, created by human authors and elevated unto deity by tradition and television. Conversely, you are also not fit for public office if you cannot defend the rights of the Opus Dei to insist on the exact opposite of these. And to understand why.

There is a widespread misconception that the only thing actually forbidden is the outright establishment of a full-blown state religion. That is clearly refuted by the forbidden financial and material expenditures that "respect an establishment of religion" but don't re-establish the Spanish Catholic Taliban frailocracy. But someday, I hope a brave president will put a stop to the daily Roman Catholic Masses held right in national government offices like the Supreme Court and Malacañang, a tyranny of the majority that daily insults Muslims and non-Catholics and breaks the law with impunity. Catholic idolatry in government offices is one mother of secession, resentment and terrorism in Mindanao, the fathers being the same thing that killed Rizal—incest between the Church and the State, between religion and politics. It is not just the camel's nose with these Catholic Masses, the whole darn animal is in the tent being ridden by Sto. Niños trampling the Constitution.

I wouldn't mind it so much if it weren't for all the erudite plunder being conducted to the sublime chants of Gregorian monks. This year alone, the World Bank and Transparency International estimate that at least P100 billion will be lost to graft and corruption in the Philippines. Contrary to elitist myth, most of that does not go to lowly clerks or *kotong* cops but in plunderous chunks of tens of millions in secret deals and smart arrangements. It takes a lot of educated brain cells to get away with so much sweet booty, when the auditors are such dedicated saints, and the good overthrew the evil to sweep away graft and corruption. (*Visit my personal website at http://deanjorgebocobo.blogspot.com/*)

Wishes for 2004

READERS' ADVOCATE

Raul J. Palabrica

LAST week, I wrote about the suggestions of some readers on how to make the INQUIRER a better newspaper. The "wish list" was a compilation of the response to an informal survey I conducted a few weeks back among the readers who write to me regularly.

Several readers felt they were discriminated against when they were not included in the poll. So they e-mailed to me their own version in completing the phrase, "I would like the INQUIRER more if..." By and large, their thoughts on what they think a good newspaper should be matched those earlier made by the readers I featured in last week's column.

This time, I would like to turn the tables, sort of. It will be my own version of a "Dear Santa" letter or what I wish from some readers.

If I may be allowed to backtrack a bit, in my last column for 2002 I requested the readers to be more careful in their choice of words when they complain about news and photos. Grievances, after all, can be expressed without resorting to foul or abrasive language.

Apparently, the Fates granted my wish. Except for a few, most of the letters I received this year seemed to have been written by readers who passed with flying colors a course on "Good Manners and Right Conduct."

For the coming year, I wish the readers who send their letters by postal service, facsimile or e-mail will not assume that I receive them within hours or days of their mailing or transmission.

On several occasions, I got irate calls and letters from readers berating me for not acknowledging receipt or answering their written communications to me.

I have also been accused of being selective in the choice of letters to answer or feature in my column.

Slow mail

Reacting to the perceived slight on his pride, a reader threatened to report me to the president of the newspaper and ask for my relief due to gross neglect of my duties as readers' advocate. Another said my position was "all for show and is meant only to give the impression to the readers that the INQUIRER listens to their complaints."

I do not claim to have a fault-free system for receiving the letters and e-mail sent by the readers, but I think I have put in place a mechanism that ensures that all these communications get to my desk promptly and that my computer is properly maintained to accept e-mail from all corners of the world.

In spite of declarations to the contrary by the postal authorities, letters sent by mail no longer reach their destinations with the same speed they used to. It is not uncommon for me to receive mail two weeks from the date it was stamped "Received" by a postal office in Luzon. Can you imagine how long it takes to reach me if the letter comes from the Visayas or Mindanao?

With regard to letters sent by fax, the readers should understand that the quality of the transmission is affected by the condition of the fax machine that is used. If the copy that comes out of the newspaper's fax machine is garbled or unreadable, my secretary calls the number of the transmitting telephone that is usually indicated in the copy to request that the document be re-sent. In case there is no such number, the faxed letter winds up in the waste basket.

Virus

I would like to request the readers who send their letters by fax to either put their forwarding number or call my office to confirm receipt of a clear copy of their transmission. I usually fax my reply (if there is such a request) to the number appearing in the letter, unless the reader states a different way for me to respond to his or her complaint.

As for e-mail, I think their senders should know by now that the Internet system is not perfect. It is susceptible (and how!) to unexpected breakdowns, malfunctions and other technological glitches that distort or prevent the clean transmission of electronic communications.

Additionally, the Internet facilities of the INQUIRER have built-in mechanisms that enable them to automatically reject e-mail that is suspected to contain viruses that are the nightmare of the newspaper's IT staff.

So before any reader jumps to nasty conclusions about the lack of response to his e-mail, it may be a good idea for him to consider if something beyond his or my control might have prevented his e-mail from getting to me or my response from reaching him.

It is also my wish for 2004 that people who figure in the news will stop thinking that part of my job is to make arrangements for them to be able to talk personally to the reporters or members of the editorial staff who, in their opinion, did not treat them fairly in the reporting of the news. Not content with just sending letter-complaints or PR materials, these news personalities insist on having a one-on-one with whoever they think is responsible for projecting them in a bad light before the public. The feeling of self-importance of these people is simply overwhelming.

Appointments

There is this spokesperson of a left-leaning organization who asked me, by e-mail, to set up a meeting with the editors at a particular time and date so he could personally explain to them their program and counteract the efforts of another group to steal the limelight from them.

After forwarding his request to the secretary of the editor in chief, I wrote him to say what I had done and gave him the numbers to call to follow up his request. He wrote back to insist that I should make the arrangements for him "to prove that the INQUIRER is really fair and objective in reporting the activities of the progressive movements in the country."

I retorted that I am not the appointments secretary of the editorial staff so all requests for meetings with the editors should be coursed directly to them or their secretaries. He was adamant. He demanded that I do the arrangements for their organization, otherwise he would elevate the matter to higher management.

As I saw no point in further arguing with him, I did not reply to his ranting anymore. His subsequent e-mail to me invariably encouraged me to press the "delete" key without hesitation.

The advice I gave that overzealous spokesperson applies to news personalities or readers who may be similarly situated.

Happy New Year!

* * *

The readers' advocate may be reached at the following address: "The Readers' Advocate" c/o Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City. Or through fax nos. 897-4793 to 94, or readers advocate@inquirer.com.ph.

The INQUIRER is a member of the
PHILIPPINE PRESS INSTITUTE
The National Association of Philippine Newspapers

FPJ is the wild card in 2004

WHY are the Makati businessmen alarmed by the non-appearance of presidential aspirant Fernando Poe Jr. during their recent meeting? The other aspirants—Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, Raul Roco and Panfilo Lacson—attended the meeting and presented their platforms or plans, but they hardly made waves.

The explanation is important. Ms Macapagal, Roco and Lacson are known cards in the presidential derby. They are competing for the presidency within the framework of conventional wisdom. They all consider corruption the mother of the country's problems. They are all for transparency and good or honest governance. They are all for peace and order. Over and above all, they are all for unquestioning adherence to the country's "established policies"—those imposed upon the Philippines by the conditionalities of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund and by the free trade covenants made at the Uruguay Round of the World Trade Organization. Therefore, their platforms or plans for 2004 are not news anymore.

Of the presidential aspirants, FPJ is the wild card. Will he consider corruption the mother of all problems, or will he see the roots of poverty and injustice in free trade (now called globalization), which has been oppressing the Filipino masses by preventing the industrialization of the country since 1909? Will he limit himself to good or honest governance and, for the benefit of transnational corporations and their Filipino subalterns, let the profit-driven market freely govern the nation? Will he focus only on peace and order and make the government act merely as the security guard of profit-driven corporate giants, foreign and local? Over and above all, will he respect the obscene sanctity of the WB-IMF-WTO conditionalities which have kept our economy pre-industrial and the Filipino masses, who idolize him, impoverished, hungry and oppressed?

Not only the Makati businessmen are waiting for FPJ's answers to these questions. The masses are also waiting. They do not want a repeat of what Erap did. The masses elected Erap to the presidency but when he became president, he sought to amend Article XII of the Constitution to deliver the national economy and patrimony to foreigners. They want FPJ to be truly their liberator from poverty and injustice.

When FPJ spells out his platform, whom will he please—the Makati businessmen and their foreign partners or the Filipino masses? He cannot please them both. He has to make a choice.

—AMADO GAT INCIONG,
Unit 301 Union Square
Condominium, 145 15th Avenue,
Cubao, Quezon City

Eid'l Fitr day was correct date

THIS is a reaction to the article of Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. last Nov. 27, 2003 titled, "Oops! She did it again: Wrong day declared for the Muslim holiday."

Malacañang did not commit any mistake in declaring Nov. 26, 2003 as a national legal holiday for the Muslims in celebrating Eid'l Fitr.

Section 3 of Republic Act 9177 provides: "The implementation of this Act shall be under the supervision of the Office on Muslim Affairs (OMA) which shall promulgate the rules and regulation pursuant to the provision of this Act. xxx."

On Nov. 30, 2002, OMA held its initial Ulama Consultative Conference precisely to formulate rules and regulations implementing RA 9177. The Ulama, who attended the said meeting, passed Resolution No. 02-003 which provides: "Recommending to the President of the Republic of the Philippines to recognize every 2nd day of the two days after the 29th day of Ramadan Hijrah Calendar as the National Legal Holiday for the celebration of Eid'l Fitr/Hariraya Puasa in the Philippines."

Nov. 24, 2003 was the 29th day of Ramadan, therefore, the second day after the 29th of Ramadan was Nov. 26, 2003. Hence, Malacañang was right.

After all, the feast of Eid'l Fitr consists of three days after the 29th day of the Holy Month. Aside from this, the declaration of a holiday does not necessarily mean that it is the same date as that of the prayer of Eid'l Fitr or as we call it, Qutbah.

—OMAIMAH E. GANDAMRA,
Xavier University-Ateneo de
Cagayan, Cagayan de Oro City

The blessings of electricity

WHY certain people fail to see beyond their noses on the issue of the power rate hike is beyond me.

Now that Meralco has been granted a 12-centavo rate increase, admittedly an absolute pittance in light of the improvements that the distribution facility has promised to implement, expect so-called "consumer advocates" and "pro-people" politicians to raise a howl that will be heard from here to Batanes.

Where will those 12 centavos per kilowatt-hour go? According to Jesus Francisco of Meralco, they have lined up 42 capital projects in order to cater to the Filipinos' increasing demand for power. The company will also reportedly replace some 30-year-old power transformers, and improve the efficiency of its sub-transmission system.

Any businessman worth his salt understands that electric power is crucial to any enterprise, whether large or small, well established or a newcomer. The business sector is already jittery over the country's political situation. The specter of blackouts may well be the last nail that will seal our economic fate. How can the Philippines become a "strong republic" if its people are rendered immobile and helpless by unreliable power supply?

Indeed, as my mother used to tell me, you don't truly appreciate something until you lose it. That goes for the blessings of electricity as well.

—ALICIA FRENCH,
Estrada Street,
Malate, Manila

LETTERS

Belmonte has done much for QC

THE COMMENTS of Neal Cruz in his Dec. 15 column were not only untrue but unfair and unkind to Quezon City Mayor Sonny Belmonte.

Belmonte has always been available to everyone who wants to discuss anything with him. He diligently attends to hundreds of visitors every day, particularly on Mondays which is designated as People's Day.

Our chamber can attest to the fact that Belmonte always finds time to discuss issues and concerns involving the business community in Quezon City.

In fact, the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry recently adjudged Quezon City as "the most business-friendly city" in the country today.

I have had the opportunity to work closely with the mayor on many projects which involved the business sector in our city.

We are aware and proud of the numerous accomplishments of Belmonte in the last two and a half years.

One of his most remarkable achievements was in turning around the financial position of Quezon City. The city treasury had a cash deficit of over P10 million when Belmonte assumed office. Today, Quezon City has over P3.2 billion in cash deposits, including revenues of more than P6.2 billion as of this date.

The Commission on Audit considers Quezon City as the "richest city in the country today."

A panel of experts on local government administration recently adjudged Belmonte as "the most outstanding city mayor of the Philippines."

These are unsolicited awards and honors merited by Belmonte and his administration.

The chamber and other business organizations in Quezon City honored Belmonte in a testimonial dinner last Dec. 18 in gratitude to him for the many positive changes and reforms he has undertaken to transform Quezon City into a quality community.

—NATHAN C. ZULUETA,
president and CEO,
Quezon City Chamber of
Commerce and Industry,
Aurora Boulevard, Quezon City

Ople's biggest legacy

THE DEPARTMENT of Labor and Employment takes strong exception to the conclusion of Jerome Aning that "Ople's biggest legacy... will be his 1999 sponsorship of the ratification of the Visiting Forces Agreement."

It is not for your reporter to predict history's judgment of the late senator and former labor secretary. He is to report only the facts.

For him to say that Ople's sponsorship of the VFA was his biggest legacy would be unfair to the individual and collective wisdom of the senators who, after full debate, voted for the VFA.

That remark was off the mark. The VFA is only one of several chapters in the Philippines' storied history of forging close socio-economic and political ties with the United States as a major ally, whereas, history is fairly complete in its rendition of the account of Ople's single, most important contribution to the Filipinos' struggle for social justice and economic self-reliance: the revision of the country's labor laws and the promulgation on May 1, 1974 of Presidential Decree 442, otherwise known as the Labor Code of the Philippines.

This is Ople's biggest among his numerous legacies.

—NICON F. FAMERONAG,
director, Department of Labor
and Employment, Information
and Public Service, 6/F DOLE
Bldg., Intramuros, Manila

Like an African country

THE PHILIPPINES is like an African country plunked right in the middle of Southeast Asia. In contrast to our tranquil neighbors, we are like an African country hopping from one crisis to other. We are also run like an African country, graft-ridden and inefficient. The only difference is that the Philippines claims to have a literacy rate of almost 100 percent. I cannot understand why we Filipinos, who are supposed to be one of the better educated people in Asia, allow our politicians to rob us blind.

The main reason why we are in a state of perpetual crisis and are lagging behind most of our neighbors is because we are a nation of lawyers. We are a country fascinated with lawyers, we put the top 10 bar topnotchers on the front page of all newspapers. They should feature instead the top MBA graduates of AIM, UP, La Salle and Ateneo, or engineering graduates of La Salle, UP, UST, etc. Also, I cannot understand what is so great about the legal profession when our legal system is one of the worst in the region. Our country is strife-ridden because we have too many lawyers, for lawyers are conflict-oriented, that is what they are trained for, they are not solution-oriented unlike businessmen or engineers.

Singapore is currently building new and modern port facilities to make loading and unloading of goods more efficient and thus, cheaper. South Korea is upgrading its telecom facilities and is now the most wired country in the world, to improve its competitiveness. Malaysia is building a new city, Cyberjaya, to attract high-tech industries. In our case we are busy debating the constitutionality of this or the constitutionality of that, the result is a poor country.

Our President today claims to be an economist but has no economic policy, she has no stand on anything, she shifts with the wind and makes decisions based on political expediency. I noticed this even when she was still a senator. She is forever campaigning, possibly thinking that politicking is better than performance.

What we need is a relatively young tycoon as president, like Manny Pangilinan of PLDT, Joey Concepcion of RFM, Lance Gokongwei of JG Summit, Jaime Alfonso Zobel of Ayala Corp., etc. These are the kind of people we need to run the government, they are well educated, creative, decisive and very good managers. The government is like a big corporation, only bigger, you need a very experienced manager to run it. It is business that makes a country progressive and who better to run the country than people who understand business.

I believe that the Makati Business Club, the PCCI, the IBP, people from the academe such as the UP Law Center, the department of economics of both UP and Ateneo, the AIM, Ateneo and La Salle business schools, as well as civil society groups should meet and hammer out the type of government and the polices we need to get this country going.

—RICO XERES,
Eisenhower Street,
Greenhills, San Juan, MM

Araneta Center
SALE
UP TO
50%
OFF
on great selections
December 26 to 31

ALIMALL
where shopping is easy!

FarmersPlaza
The Newly - Renovated
Value - for - Money Mall

find it here at
Araneta Center

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A3-737, Series of 2003

NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU
Room 201, Bonuan Apartelle
10 Happy Glen Loop, Baguio City
Tel. No. (074)443-9255
Fax No. (074)443-8971
E-mail: inq_baguio@inquirer.com.ph

SOUTHERN LUZON BUREAU
23 Aurora St., Old Albay District
Legazpi City
Tel. No. (052) 820-8402
Fax No. (052) 820-1274
E-mail: inq_bicol@inquirer.com.ph

Across the NATION
E-mail: pr_provincial_news@inquirer.com.ph
Assistant Editor Tony Bergonia

VISAYAS BUREAU
c/o Cebu Daily News
18-15 Escario St., Cebu City
Tel. Nos. (032) 233-0346/233-0349
Fax No. (032) 232-9938
E-mail: pdivis@skyinet.net

MINDANAO BUREAU
FEP Printing Corp. Bldg.
Ma-a Road, Davao City
Tel. No. (082)244-1770 to 71
Fax No. (082)244-1771
E-mail: pdiminda@dv.webling.com

Auditor, son killed in grenade blast

COTABATO CITY—A government auditor and his 14-year-old son died when unidentified suspects lobbed a grenade inside their house in Zenaida Subdivision in Barangay Rosary Heights here on Saturday evening.

The attack on Maximo Pamlian, 54, auditor of the Department of Education-Maguindanao division office happened in the wake of a controversy surrounding the DepEd in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) over the non-remittance of teachers' premiums to the Government Service Insurance System.

PO2 Eduardo Torres, police investigator, said Pamlian and his son, Jonie, died upon arrival at the Cotabato Regional Medical Center (CRMC).

Pamlian's other children, Janisa, 18, a second year high school student, and Basron, 22, were also wounded in the attack but his other child Mican, 17, escaped unscathed.

Torres said Pamlian and his children were watching television when the suspects hurled the grenade.

The explosive landed right at the house's living room, where the victims were.

He said Pamlian threw himself on the grenade in an effort to save his family.

"Had the father not covered the explosive with his body, all of them could have died," Torres said.

Police refused to comment on the motive of the attack.

About a week ago, hundreds of teachers staged a peaceful rally in front of the DepEd-ARMM office against the non-remittance of their GSIS contribution. *Edwin Fernandez and Rosa-May de Guzman, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

SWEET ANTICIPATION TOOTS SOBERANO
Old toys and clothing are brand new for these poor kids of Antamok Tram, Itogon, Benguet as they await the gift-giving activity by the Pines Scooter Club.

New tax collection scheme goes on-line

ILIGAN CITY—Tax evaders in this city would now have to find new ways to cheat the government.

The Tax Revenue Assessment and Collection System (TRACS) has gone into full operation here on Friday.

Officials said cheating businessmen would no longer have a way of escaping tax collection because of the sophisticated system of assessing and collecting taxes.

The city has been using TRACS since 1998 but on limited basis only.

But officials expect that with its full operation, the city's tax collection would be more efficient.

Rudy Nadayag, acting operations manager of the Iligan City Treasurer's Office, said since its use in 1998, TRACS, "a multi-user and multi-tiered network application that can be ported into the Internet" has greatly reduced corruption and has improved the tax collection efficiency here.

He said with the full operation, taxpayers could now browse their assessments on-line and that this could further cut the need for tax collectors to go to the clients.

Nadayag said the use of the system in the past has prevented attempts from tax evaders to bribe revenue personnel.

"This is because of the strict compliance procedure of the system," Nadayag explained while showing a detailed flow of the collection process.

"We would like to celebrate with this victory as (TRACS) has addressed the historic problem of red tape in the city and promoted transparency," Mayor Franklin Quijano said of the computerized system funded by Australian Aid for International Development (AusAID).

Iligan is only one of the few cities that use the TRACS.

Quijano said the system has not boosted the city's revenue collection "because of the shutdown of the National Steel Corp."

Jeffrey Maningo and Jesafe Aisha Echavez, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Cold weather makes freshwater fish sick

DAGUPAN CITY—The cold weather is good for vacationers and honeymooners but not for some varieties of fish that get sick and eventually die.

If there is a limited supply of fish on the residents' dinner tables during the holidays, it is because freshwater varieties and those grown in fishponds could not stand the biting cold, said Westly Rosario, chief of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources' research center here.

Rosario has advised fishpond operators not to overstock their ponds at this time of the year because fishes are more prone to diseases.

"The diseases are (caused by) opportunistic organisms from the environment that strike *tilapia* and *bangus* (milkfish) when they grow weak. Worms, parasites and bacteria grow in the bellies of these fishes," he said.

Sick fishes, however, are safe to eat as long as they are cooked well, according to Rosario.

He said indigenous and freshwater fishes such as catfish, mudfish, carp, *gurami* and cultured fishes like *tilapia* and *bangus* are usually stricken by parasites during the cold season so their growth is stunted.

Rosario also said salmon is rare nowadays because of the cold climate. The salmon looks for food in warm waters, he said.

Farmers in Baguio City and other landlocked areas in the Cordillera, where temperature is low, stock their ponds with a few *tilapia* so they could harvest and sell it in December and January when there is not enough supply of fish in the market.

In Baguio City, a limited supply of fish has been transported to the city's public market as the mercury dropped to 9.2 degrees Celsius on Dec. 21, the coldest temperature recorded since March 18 this year.

Rosario said he gave a group of residents from Mt. Province a supply of freshwater silver perch (*Bidyanus bidyanus*) from Australia because this species was found to breed during the cold season. *Gobleth Moulic, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Baguio residents await GMA, as First Gentleman slips into City of Pines

By Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo slipped quietly into Baguio on Saturday, despite Malacañang's announcement that members of the First Family would no longer hold their annual Christmas break here in deference to the victims of the Southern Leyte landslides.

Arroyo attended the annual Christmas party of US Ambassador Francis Ricciardone at Camp John Hay on Saturday afternoon, according to police and guests of the party.

He was accompanied by his youngest son Dato. Arroyo was also seen at the Baguio Country Club on Saturday night.

Senior Supt. Francisco Manalo Jr., Baguio police director, said Arroyo and his son left Baguio on Sunday, "still incognito."

Ms Macapagal, during her visit in Dagupan City on Friday, told her audience that she was donating her family's vacation budget to the survivors of the Southern Leyte flash floods and landslides that killed at least 200 people.

She went to Pangasinan after Christmas Day and inspected several projects there, but flew back to the Palace, instead of going to Baguio where she and her family spend their annual holidays.

New year vacation

Unconfirmed reports, however, indicate that the President's family members are arriving this week for a private New Year vacation.

Vice Mayor Betty Lourdes Tabanda said assurances were made during the party that Ms Macapagal would return to the city to attend the Rizal Day celebration on Tuesday.

But Baguio residents have been hoping to see Ms Macapagal herself celebrate Rizal Day at the Rizal Park here, just as she did a year ago.

Joan Carling, chair of the militant Cordillera Peoples Alliance (CPA), said the First Family's decision to avoid Baguio "appeared calculated to avoid explaining to the public why she broke her vow not to run for a full presidential term next year."

Explanation

Carling said Ms Macapagal made a bold, and even heroic, move last year when she announced that she was sacrificing her political ambitions in order to unify the country and stop an economic crisis.

But the President withdrew that commitment in October this year, when she opted to run for president in the 2004 polls.

Carling said Ms Macapagal's decision "to break her promise in Baguio" was ironic because it was one pledge her Left-wing critics had respected most in her term since the ouster of former President Joseph Estrada 2001.

Holding the traditional Rizal Day rites in Baguio for a third time would risk putting the President on "the political defensive," Carling said.

"But the people of Baguio needs an explanation, because when she declared (her political sacrifice last year) on the same spot, she made residents believe that she has stopped politicking," she said.

"Now, all we know about her is that she can break her own word," she added.

YOUR BANK OF CHOICE HAS A GIFT FOR YOU.

OPEN ON DEC. 26 AND JAN. 2.

To serve you better, 89 branches nationwide will be open on these dates:
December 26, 2003 and January 2, 2004, from 9 am to 12 nn.
A yearend gift and New year's resolution to be closer to you. Because all we do is all for you to be your bank of choice.

Equitable PCI BANK
Your Bank of Choice

Contact our Call Center at 84-911 (Metro Manila)
and 1-800-188-84-911 (Provincial)
or visit www.equitablepcib.com

BRANCHES OPEN ON DECEMBER 26, 2003

NORTHERN METRO
8th Avenue - Grace Park

EASTERN METRO
New Sta Lucia East - Cainta
Robinson's Metro East
SM City - Fairview
SM City - North Edsa

WESTERN METRO
A. Linao - Paco
Central Market - V. Fugoso

CENTRAL METRO
Greenhills Shopping Center
Pioneer Highlands - Madison

SOUTHERN METRO
NAIA 1
Manuela Metropolis - Alabang
Redemptorist Road - Baclaran

MAKATI
Makati Cinema Square

NORTHERN LUZON
Abanao Square Mall - Baguio
Alaminos - Pangasinan
Batintawak St. - Laoag
Bonifacio St. - Tuguegarao
Fernandez - Dagupan City
San Fernando - La Union
Santiago - Isabela

CENTRAL LUZON
Congreso - Malolos
Dolores - San Fernando
Maharlika Road - Cabanatuan City
Nepo Mart - Angeles City
Puregold - Clarkfield
Times Square - Subic

SOUTHERN LUZON
A. Mabini - Biñan
Daraga - Rizal St.

Gen. Luna - Naga
Lipa - Rotonda
North - Calamba Crossing
P. Burgos - Batangas City
Quezon Ave. - Lucena
Sta. Rosa - South Express

VISAYAS
F. Gonzales - Cebu City
Gorordo - Cebu City
North - Mandaue
Iznart - Iloilo
Salazar - Tacloban
Goldenfield - Bacolod

MINDANAO
C.M. Recto - Davao City
Lapasan - Cagayan de Oro
Santiago St. - General Santos
Sta. Ana - Davao City

BRANCHES OPEN ON JANUARY 2, 2004

NORTHERN METRO
Lapu-Lapu - Northbay
Marulas - McArthur

EASTERN METRO
Aurora Blvd. - Annapolis
Marikina - JP Rizal
Sixto Antonio - Pasig

WESTERN METRO
C. Palanca - Quiapo
M. de Santos - Ilaya

CENTRAL METRO
Ortigas Avenue - Greenhills
Robinson's Galleria - Ortigas

SOUTHERN METRO
NAIA 1
Manuela Metropolis - Alabang
Redemptorist Road - Baclaran

MAKATI
MC Home Depot - Fort Bonifacio

NORTHERN LUZON
Alexander - Urdaneta
Castro - Laoag
Cauayan - Isabela
Perez - Dagupan City
Session Road - Baguio

CENTRAL LUZON
Centennial - Clarkfield
Miranda - Angeles City
Olongapo - Rizal Avenue
Plaridel - Bulacan
San Agustin - San Fernando
Sanciangco - Cabanatuan

SOUTHERN LUZON
Caceres - Naga
C.M. Recto - Lipa
Enriquez - Lucena

Kumintang - Batangas
Pacita - San Pedro
Rizal St. - Legaspi
Waltermart - Sta. Rosa
Waltermart - Calamba

VISAYAS
Borromeo - Cebu City
Osmena Blvd. - Cebu City
South - Mandaue
Valeria - Iloilo
Burgos - Ormoc
Araneta - Bacolod
Colon - Dumaguete

MINDANAO
Pendatun - Gen. Santos
R. Alunan - Koronadal
R. Magsaysay Ave. - Davao City
San Pedro - Davao City
Vamenta - Cagayan de Oro
Velez - Cagayan de Oro

PLUS MEGALINK
Member Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation. Deposits insured up to P100,000

Xmas brings new school rooms for Ifugao pupils

By Ben Moses Ebreo
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

LAMUT, Ifugao—The cold breeze of the Christmas season brought joy and hope for the villagers of Barangay Bimpal here as their wish for additional classrooms were realized on Dec. 22.

The villagers, composed of school officials, parents and their children, gathered in the school compound and witnessed the groundbreaking of two classrooms—gifts from the Filipino community in Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates and two Malaysian employers.

The classrooms will be built within the Hapid National High School Bimpal Annex (HNHSBA) compound. Community folk said the new school buildings would spare them from repairing makeshift classrooms that are perennially damaged by typhoons and strong winds.

The construction of the two 7 meter by 7 meter classrooms, each equipped with a toilet and blackboard, will be started this January. These were donated by the Filipino community of Abu Dhabi and Juliet Chin and a certain "Mr. C.Y." of Malaysia.

The Filipino workers and the Malaysians donated a total of $8,000 (P222,360) for the "Classroom Galing sa Mamamayang Pilipino Abroad (CGMA)" in Lamut, according to lawyer Delmer Cruz, deputy administrator of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration.

Cruz said the project was coordinated by the departments of labor and employment, foreign affairs and education and the Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

"*Nagpapasalamat kami sa proyektong ito dahil napakahirap ang sitwasyon ng mga bata namin dito. Magandang pamasko ito at tulong ito sa amin* (We are very grateful for this project because the situation of our children here is difficult. This is a good gift, a big help to us)," said Lawrence Dulnuan, 28, president of the local Parents, Teachers and Community Association (PTCA).

Dulnuan said PTCA members usually build additional makeshift classrooms as the number of students increases every school year.

The school, established and built in 2001, has 327 students, who are scattered in seven sections from first to third year levels.

He said their children, once inside the makeshift classrooms, have to contend with muddy and wet grounds during the rainy season, scorching heat or mosquito bites.

Honorio Pumihic, HNHSBA teacher, said the school was built because of the demand of villagers and local officials to accommodate students from nearby villages.

The school started with a single classroom in 2001. At present, the school has only two "permanent" classrooms, forcing many students to attend classes in makeshift rooms built by residents themselves.

"These students have to travel an hour and spend for their transportation when they go to school (in the town center). Their parents have requested the creation of this school here to answer their economic difficulties," Pumihic said.

Another problem, he said, is the lack of library facilities and books in the school.

HNHSBA accommodates students from the villages of Lamut, Kiangan and Lagawe towns.

"Our prayers for additional classrooms have been fulfilled. There are still many transferees because they want to return here and new students from Nueva Vizcaya and Quirino (want to enrol here), but we can no longer accommodate them. The number of enrollees is still increasing," Pumihic said.

Cruz said the project was the brainchild of Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas and was meant to address the critical classroom shortage in many parts of the country.

"This is indeed very timely because Hapid's pupil-classroom ratio is 176 pupils per classroom, according to the education department. They are really in dire need of additional classrooms," said Cruz.

He said the classrooms came with the government's intention to promote quality education in the country as employers continue to seek skilled and better educated employees.

He said the classroom assistance in Ifugao would add to the recently inaugurated classrooms in Caloocan City (10 classrooms), Pasig City (10 classrooms), Talavera, Nueva Ecija (two classrooms) and Victorias City in Negros Occidental (two classrooms).

MEMBERS of the Task Force dance the "ocho-ocho" during their Christmas party. JOSELLE BADILLA

Task Force Davao to stay—Duterte

DAVAO CITY—Mayor Rodrigo Duterte on Friday announced that the Task Force Davao, which was created in the aftermath of the explosions that hit the airport in March and the Sasa Wharf in April, would stay and continue to provide security to the people of the city.

"As long as I am the mayor, I will let them stay," he told the INQUIRER.

At least 48 people died and dozens injured in the explosions, which shattered the city's sense of security. Duterte said the presence of the Task Force has provided a great sense of security to Davaoeños amid the continuing terrorist threats.

He said the Task Force has also obviously discouraged terrorists from launching another attack in the city, although, he added, they could already be itching to act anew.

Romeo Serra, president of the Davao City Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCCI) agreed with Duterte's assessment.

He said because of the presence of the Task Force, which is composed of soldiers, police and militiamen, the business sector has immediately recovered from the fallout of the bombings.

Even investments were boosted by the presence of the Task Force that the P1-billion target for 2003 had already been surpassed as early as last month, he pointed out.

"The major contributing factor is the presence of the Task Force Davao. Investments reached P1.2 billion by November. The Task Force has done its job and it gave semblance of stability for investors and would be investors," Serra said.

The business community was supportive of a longer stay for the Task Force, Serra said.

Col. Gaudencio Pangilinan Jr., Task Force chief, said the Task Force would continue to "inoculate Davao City against terrorism."

Pangilinan, however, admitted that although the Task Force could "reduce the risk," the people's vigilance is still "the ultimate defense" against terrorism. *Joselle Badilla, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

6-year-old boy appeals for help for brain tumor operation

By Joselle Badilla
PDI Mindanao Bureau

KIDO

DAVAO CITY—The poster reads: "I am Mikhail Paolo Siapno. I am six years old. My friends call me Kido. I have a tumor inside my head. The doctors took out most of it last month. It is not starting to grow again. I need the Gamma Knife Treatment to make it really go away and not come back. Please join the Fun Run so that I can pay for my treatment in January. I hope this will be your Christmas gift to me."

Kido already underwent two surgeries. The first was "craniotomy" with "ventricolostomy" on Oct. 23. The operation was to remove his brain tumor and drain the water that had accumulated in his left and right brain ventricles which, according to doctors, caused his severe and persistent headaches.

Kido's first operation was successful but doctors monitored his condition for three days to see if the water from both his left and right brain ventricles would drain. Unfortunately, only water on the right side was drained.

Doctors said there was "no communication" between his left and right brain ventricles causing the headaches even after the operation.

Operation

On Oct. 28, Kido again underwent an operation. This time, to release water and allow regular drain of water from both ventricles and was given a permanent ventriculoperitoneal (VP) shunt.

A VP shunt is surgery performed to relieve intracranial pressure caused by hydrocephalus. The fluid is shunted from the brain's ventricles into the abdominal cavity or, in rare instances, the pleural space in the chest.

Kido is now a candidate for radiotherapy or radiosurgery to remove the remaining tumor the soonest possible time to prevent it from growing fast.

His parents, Denton and Catherine, opted to let Kido undergo a Gamma Knife surgery, a neuro-surgical tool designed for the treatment of brain disorders. This is said to be the preferred treatment for metastatic brain tumors worldwide.

It is a non-invasive alternative to traditional brain surgery and reduces the risk of surgical complications, like hemorrhage and infection and other side effects.

The procedure is often 25 to 30 percent less risky than the traditional neurosurgery.

"We are told that the Gamma Knife is his best option. We both opted for this radiosurgery considering the great lifetime ahead of him, but it is very expensive," Catherine told the INQUIRER.

Denton, a government employee, and Catherine, a homemaker, want to give Kido the best of everything in attaining his dream-which is to become a chef.

"I want to be a chef when I grow up. Chefs like Bobby Flay and Mario Batali because my Aunt Anna is also a chef. She loves to cook," Kido told the INQUIRER.

Catherine, a registered nurse, recently retired from her job in a local hospital to spend her time with her kids. Her other child, three-year-old Monica Therese, is a special (deaf-blind) kid.

"We didn't give up despite everything," Denton told the INQUIRER.

Very expensive

Denton and Catherine said the only facility in the Philippines that has the Gamma Knife is the Philippine Gamma Knife Center at the Cardinal Santos Medical Center.

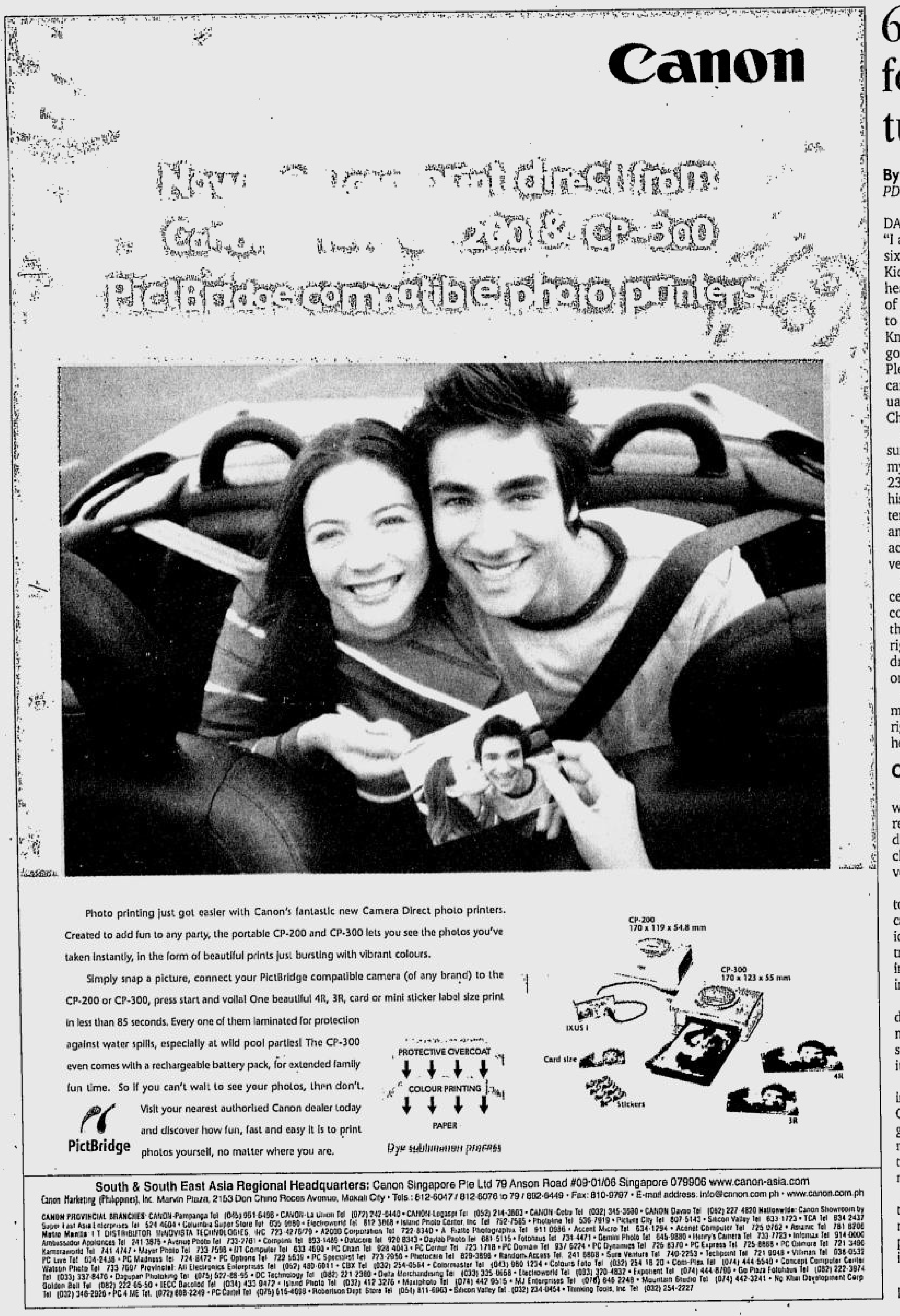
"However, we heard that it is very expensive. The operation will cost us $10,000 or about P550,000. We have already exhausted our financial resources for Kido's first two operations. We hope and pray that there would be good Samaritans who will help Kido attain his dream," they told the INQUIRER.

Kido also sings the karaoke.

"My favorite song is "Rainy Days on Mondays" and "Yesterday Once More" but my most favorite song is "Where is the Love," he said.

Yesterday, his family and friends held a fun run to raise funds for his operation hopefully next year.

For those who want to lend their hands to the family, Denton can be reached through his mobile phone numbers 0916-3426290, and Catherine, 0919-6016640.



Canon

[illegible] direct from [illegible] 200 & CP-300 PictBridge compatible photo printers

Photo printing just got easier with Canon's fantastic new Camera Direct photo printers. Created to add fun to any party, the portable CP-200 and CP-300 lets you see the photos you've taken instantly, in the form of beautiful prints just bursting with vibrant colours.

Simply snap a picture, connect your PictBridge compatible camera (of any brand) to the CP-200 or CP-300, press start and voila! One beautiful 4R, 3R, card or mini sticker label size print in less than 85 seconds. Every one of them laminated for protection against water spills, especially at wild pool parties! The CP-300 even comes with a rechargeable battery pack, for extended family fun time. So if you can't wait to see your photos, then don't.

Visit your nearest authorised Canon dealer today and discover how fun, fast and easy it is to print photos yourself, no matter where you are.

PictBridge

South & South East Asia Regional Headquarters: Canon Singapore Pte Ltd 79 Anson Road #09-01/06 Singapore 079906 www.canon-asia.com
Canon Marketing (Philippines), Inc. Marvin Plaza, 2153 Don Chino Roces Avenue, Makati City • Tels.: 812-6047 / 812-6076 to 79 / 892-6449 • Fax: 810-0797 • E-mail address: info@cannon.com.ph • www.canon.com.ph

Cops bust syndicate selling fake dollars in N. Luzon

BAGUIO CITY—Thirteen members of a group involved in the sale and distribution of fake United States dollars and bank certificates in Northern Luzon were arrested in San Fernando City, La Union on Friday, reports from the Ilocos regional police office said.

Recovered from the suspects were $162,906,900 in counterfeit bills and fake treasury and gold bullion certificates from banks and insurance firms in the US and Europe.

A report by Senior Supt. Franklin Jesus Bucayu, head of the team that arrested the suspects, said eight suspects were arrested in an entrapment operation at Poro Point, San Fernando, La Union on Friday noon, while five other suspects were later arrested near the Oasis Resort Hotel, also in the city.

Arrested were Rolando Aquino, 43; Ernesto Camannong, 50; Jun Osnero, 35; Gloria Batario, 57; Raffy Singson, 49; Edna Bengson, 41; Maria Henedina Jacusalem, 44; Eloisa Posadas, 45; Gallardo Estacio, 56; Leonardo Napoles, 46; Marietta Mejia, 57; Pepito Bernisca, 45; and Lilia Estacio, 51. They are residents of Baguio City, La Union and Pangasinan.

Police reports said the group sells the fake dollar bills and bank certificates in Baguio and San Fernando cities.

Also recovered from the suspects were a Mitsubishi Lancer car, a Toyota Hi-Lux pickup and a Kia Besta van.

Bucayu said a certification issued by Ramon Espejo, manager of the Bank of the Philippine Islands in San Fernando City, confirmed that the dollar bills were fake.

The report said some of the bank certificates that the suspects were carrying bore the signatures of the late President Ferdinand Marcos and former Central Bank governor Jaime Laya.

PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

NINE suspects of a fake-dollar syndicate were arrested by the police after an entrapment operation in Poro Point, San Fernando City, La Union. Senior Supt. Romeo Espiritu said the operation led to the confiscation of fake $100 bills and fake gold bullion certificates. TOOTS SOBERANO/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

Probe threats on PDI reporter, GMA urged

BAGUIO CITY—The Pangasinan Tri-Media Association (Patrima) has asked President Macapagal-Arroyo, Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. and police officials to conduct a "thorough and sustained investigation" on the threats received by INQUIRER correspondent Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes.

"(Patrima) strongly denounces the insidious and cowardly attempt of a person or some persons to muzzle the freedom of a colleague . . . to write about venality," the group said in a one-page manifesto on Sunday. The manifesto, signed by Patrima president Minerva Caburnay on behalf of the group's officers and members, was sent by fax to the INQUIRER's Northern Luzon Bureau office.

On Saturday, Fuertes received a funeral wreath from an unidentified sender. The wreath was delivered to her house in Calasiao town two days after she received threats from a man through calls and text messages in her mobile phone.

Fuertes, who covers Pangasinan for the INQUIRER and also a convenor of Patrima, said the threats could have been the result of her reports on jueteng operations in Pangasinan.

Patrima said the man who was threatening Fuertes has a "sick mind" and can be considered a "walking social menace unfit to mingle with a civilized community."

Patrima also appealed to Director General Hermogenes Ebdane Jr., Philippine National Police chief, and Pangasinan police officials to identify and arrest the suspect immediately.

"Let it be known by this foul character . . . that the Patrima stands four-square behind Fuertes in the name of the bastion on which all institutions of democracy are based—freedom of speech and of the press," the group said.

Supt. Mario Sandiego, Pangasinan police director, ordered Supt. Rolando Magno of the provincial police's special operations group and his men to investigate the threats after Fuertes reported it to the police.

Magno has already assigned a security aide to Fuertes.

De Venecia, who represents the fourth district of Pangasinan, has offered Fuertes assistance, in whatever form, in investigating the matter. *PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Cops hit for slow probe of peasant leader's slay

By Marlon Ramos
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

BAY, Laguna—Five days after the killing of former peasant leader Romy Malabanan, the police have yet to come up with a clear lead on the real motive for the Dec. 23 murder of the former executive assistant of the mayor of Bay, Laguna.

Malabanan was killed by a lone gunman in front of his house last Tuesday.

His widow, Flora, questioned what she called the police's inability to quickly come up with a clear investigation of the case.

She claimed that the police seemed to be insincere in solving the killing, noting that, "they did not bother to see and talk to me or to other members of our family."

Escape

Militant peasant and human rights groups also criticized the three local policemen who were supposedly standing less than 20 meters from where Romy was gunned down.

"The policemen should better explain their business there. They should also come up with a good explanation why they let the suspect escape," Karapatan-Laguna secretary general Doris Cuario told the INQUIRER.

In a phone interview, Chief Insp. Nestor de la Cueva, town police chief, said he would invite all the witnesses who saw the suspect pumping a single bullet on Romy's face.

De la Cueva admitted that three of his men were near the crime scene when the incident happened. But he denied that the police had a hand in the killing.

He said the police tried to run after the gunman but their service weapons "unfortunately" jammed when they fired a shot at the suspect.

"Why would we kill Ka Romy? He was a municipal employee. In fact, my men were the first ones to help the victim and rushed him to a nearby hospital," he said.

Appeal

Malabanan's widow also appealed to the media to be sensitive and fair in reporting about her husband.

She said her husband "was just an ordinary farmer fighting for the people's rights to live decently," and not the "former right hand of communist leader Gregorio Rosal" as reported on national radio and several tabloids and broadsheets.

She told the INQUIRER that some tabloids even called Ka Romy as a former high-ranking official of the communist-led New People's Army (NPA) operating in Southern Tagalog.

Malabanan feared that the inaccurate media accounts of Romy's killing could endanger the lives of their sons and other family members.

She said such incorrect information could make them likely targets of military and the police.

Malabanan was the chair of Pagkakaisa't Ugnayan ng mga Magbubukid sa Laguna until he suffered from a stroke that paralyzed half of his body in 2001.

Despite the disability, he managed to involve himself in party-list group Bayan Muna and helped Bay Mayor Edwin Ramos in his campaign in the last local elections.

SONY. Sony Ericsson Sony Life Sony Music MagnaVision COLUMBIA PICTURES

Buy any Sony product or service that can win you one of these exciting Sony prizes:

4 Sony Home Theater Package
(KV-XF25N90 & DAV-C700)

Sony Grand Raffle

40 Columbia (Sony) Pictures VCD Movie Collection
(10 VCD disc per winner)

4 Sony Ericsson T105 Mobile Phones
(Sony Ericsson T-105)

4 Sony Life Insurance CD and DVD Collection
(10 DVD & 2 CD per winner)

4 Sony Music Meteor Garden Series VCD Collection
(50 VCD disc per winner)

MECHANICS
1. Raffle stubs will be issued to the customer for the following purchases at participating dealers/ outlets:
Sony Philippines: For every purchase of Sony Electronic products worth:

P 1,000 - P 25,000 = 1 raffle coupon
P 25,001 - P 50,000 = 2 raffle coupons
P 50,001 - P 75,000 = 3 raffle coupons
P 75,001 - P 100,000 = 4 raffle coupons
P 100,001 - P 125,000 = 5 raffle coupons
P 125,001 - P 150,000 = 6 raffle coupons
P 150,001 - P 175,000 = 7 raffle coupons
P 175,001 - P 200,000 = 8 raffle coupons
P 200,001 - UP = 10 raffle coupons

Sony Ericsson: For every P4,000 purchase of Sony Ericsson products = 1 raffle coupon

Magnavision: For every purchase of Columbia or Sony Pictures Home Entertainment Titles
One (1) VCD or DVD Title = 1 raffle coupon

Sony Music: For every purchase of Sony Music Entertainment Music Titles
One (1) CD or Cassette Title (listed below) = 1 raffle coupon
1. John Mayer - Heavier Things.
2. Beyonce Knowles - Dangerously In Love
3. Hilary Duff - Metamorphosis
4. Various Artists - We're Just Friends With Benefits
5. Various Artists - Love Storm OST
6. Various Artists - 80's Replay
7. Nickelback - The Long Road
8. Barbra Streisand - The Movie Album
9. Mandy Moore - Coverage
10. Michael Jacskon - #1s
11. Cyndi Lauper - At Last
12. A1 - The Best of
13. F4 - Meteor Rain
14. Korn - Take a Look at the Mirror
15. The Offspring - Splinter
16. Alice Peacock - Alice Peacock
17. Mariah Carey - The Remixes
18. Hilary Duff - Santa Claus Lane
19. Various Artists - The Fighting Temptations OST
20 Yo-Yo Ma - Obrigado Brazil
21. Switchfoot - The Beautiful Letdown
22. Harry Connick Jr. - Harry for the Holidays
23. Various Artists - Christmas Calling
24. Bette Midler - Bette Midler Sings the Rosemary Clooney Songbook
25. Jennifer Lopez - The Reel Me

2. Fill up the raffle stub and affix your signature then drop it off at drop boxes designated in every articipating dealers /outlets.
3. Promo period is from November 15,2003-January 15, 2004. Deadline for submission of entries is on January 15,2004, 6:00pm
4. Raffle Draw will be held on January 30,2004 , Friday at 2:00pm at Sony Philippines Head Office, 26F
Tower 1 The Enterprise Center , 6766 Ayala Avenue cor. Paseo de Roxas , Makati City. The raffle will be done in the presence of a DTI representative.
5. Prizes are not convertible to cash.
6. The 20% Tax for prizes exceeding P10,000 will be shouldered by Sony Philippines .
7. A winner can only win once. If a customer's name is drawn more than once, the prize of the bigger value will be awarded.
8. Prizes can be claimed within 60 days from notification after which , prize will be forfeited with prior approval of DTI.
9. Winners will be notified via telephone and registered mail and published in a newspaper of general circulation. Prizes may be claimed upon presentation of a valid ID with picture and with the mail stating their winning prize at the Sony Philippines Head Office, 26F Tower 1 The Enterprise Center, 6766 Ayala Avenue cor. Paseo de Roxas ,Makati City or through other Sony companies specified in the registered mail.
10. There will be a total of 20 winners for this raffle promo wherein 5 Raffle entries per Sony Company will be drawn to win 1 Sony prize each.
11. All employees of Sony Philippines , Sony Ericsson, Sonic Music , Columbia (Sony) Pictures, Magnavision dealers/outlets and their relatives up to the second degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from this promotion.

Participating Dealers / Outlets:
All Sony Philippines, Inc. authorized dealers nationwide
Astrovision Branches, Astro Plus Podium, SM Record Bars , National Bookstore
Odyssey: O Rockwell, O Greenbelt, SM Megamall XL, SM North Edsa XL, SM Bacoor XL, Filinvest XL, SM Manila XL, SM Southmall
Tower Records / Music One: Tower Records Glorietta, Tower Records Alabang, Tower Records Shangri-la, Tower Records Megamall, M1 Quezon Ave., M1 Greenbelt
Redemption Centers:
Head Offices : Sony Philippines Inc. 26F Tower 1 The Enterprise Center , 6766 Ayala Avenue cor. Paseo de Roxas , 1226 Makati City * Sony Ericsson Mobile Communications Int'l AB 7F Octagon Bldg., San Miguel Avenue,Ortigas Center , Pasig City , Metro Manila * Sony Life Insurance (Philippines) corporation 35F PBCom Tower , 6795 Ayala Avenue cor. Rufino St., 1226 Makati City * Sony Music Entertainment (Philippines) Inc. GDC 1A Bldg. 750 Shaw Blvd. Mandaluyong City * Magnavision 103 Main Avenue cor. 10th Avenue Cubao , 1100 Quezon City.

Per DTI-NCR Permit # 3339 Series of 2003.

Cops bust syndicate selling fake dollars in N. Luzon

BAGUIO CITY—Thirteen members of a group involved in the sale and distribution of fake United States dollars and bank certificates in Northern Luzon were arrested in San Fernando City, La Union on Friday, reports from the Ilocos regional police office said.

Recovered from the suspects were $162,906,900 in counterfeit bills and fake treasury and gold bullion certificates from banks and insurance firms in the US and Europe.

A report by Senior Supt. Franklin Jesus Bucayu, head of the team that arrested the suspects, said eight suspects were arrested in an entrapment operation at Poro Point, San Fernando, La Union on Friday noon, while five other suspects were later arrested near the Oasis Resort Hotel, also in the city.

Arrested were Rolando Aquino, 43; Ernesto Camannong, 50; Jun Osnero, 35; Gloria Batario, 57; Raffy Singson, 49; Edna Bengson, 41; Maria Henedina Jacusalem, 44; Eloisa Posadas, 45; Gallardo Estacio, 56; Leonardo Napoles, 46; Marietta Mejia, 57; Pepito Bernisca, 45; and Lilia Estacio, 51. They are residents of Baguio City, La Union and Pangasinan.

Police reports said the group sells the fake dollar bills and bank certificates in Baguio and San Fernando cities.

Also recovered from the suspects were a Mitsubishi Lancer car, a Toyota Hi-Lux pickup and a Kia Besta van.

Bucayu said a certification issued by Ramon Espejo, manager of the Bank of the Philippine Islands in San Fernando City, confirmed that the dollar bills were fake.

The report said some of the bank certificates that the suspects were carrying bore the signatures of the late President Ferdinand Marcos and former Central Bank governor Jaime Laya.

PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

NINE suspects of a fake-dollar syndicate were arrested by the police after an entrapment operation in Poro Point, San Fernando City, La Union. Senior Supt. Romeo Espiritu said the operation led to the confiscation of fake $100 bills and fake gold bullion certificates. TOOTS SOBERANO/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

Probe threats on PDI reporter, GMA urged

BAGUIO CITY—The Pangasinan Tri-Media Association (Patrima) has asked President Macapagal-Arroyo, Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. and police officials to conduct a "thorough and sustained investigation" on the threats received by Inquirer correspondent Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes.

"(Patrima) strongly denounces the insidious and cowardly attempt of a person or some persons to muzzle the freedom of a colleague . . to write about venality," the group said in a one-page manifesto on Sunday. The manifesto, signed by Patrima president Minerva Caburnay on behalf of the group's officers and members, was sent by fax to the Inquirer Northern Luzon Bureau office.

On Saturday, Fuertes received a funeral wreath from an unidentified sender. The wreath was delivered to her house in Calasiao town two days after she received threats from a man through calls and text messages in her mobile phone.

Fuertes, who covers Pangasinan for the Inquirer and also a convenor of Patrima, said the threats could have been the result of her reports on jueteng operations in Pangasinan.

Patrima said the man who was threatening Fuertes has a "sick mind" and can be considered a "walking social menace unfit to mingle with a civilized community."

Patrima also appealed to Director General Hermogenes Ebdane Jr., Philippine National Police chief, and Pangasinan police officials to identify and arrest the suspect immediately.

"Let it be known by this foul character . . . that the Patrima stands four-square behind Fuertes in the name of the bastion on which all institutions of democracy are based—freedom of speech and of the press," the group said.

Supt. Mario Sandiego, Pangasinan police director, ordered Supt. Rolando Magno of the provincial police's special operations group and his men to investigate the threats after Fuertes reported it to the police.

Magno has already assigned a security aide to Fuertes.

De Venecia, who represents the fourth district of Pangasinan, has offered Fuertes assistance, in whatever form, in investigating the matter. *PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Cops hit for slow probe of peasant leader's slay

By Marlon Ramos
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

BAY, Laguna—Five days after the killing of former peasant leader Romy Malabanan, the police have yet to come up with a clear lead on the real motive for the Dec. 23 murder of the former executive assistant of the mayor of Bay, Laguna.

Malabanan was killed by a lone gunman in front of his house last Tuesday.

His widow, Flora, questioned what she called the police's inability to quickly come up with a clear investigation of the case.

She claimed that the police seemed to be insincere in solving the killing, noting that, "they did not bother to see and talk to me or to other members of our family."

Escape

Militant peasant and human rights groups also criticized the three local policemen who were supposedly standing less than 20 meters from where Romy was gunned down.

"The policemen should better explain their business there. They should also come up with a good explanation why they let the suspect escape," Karapatan-Laguna secretary general Doris Cuario told the Inquirer.

In a phone interview, Chief Insp. Nestor de la Cueva, town police chief, said he would invite all the witnesses who saw the suspect pumping a single bullet on Romy's face.

De la Cueva admitted that three of his men were near the crime scene when the incident happened. But he denied that the police had a hand in the killing.

He said the police tried to run after the gunman but their service weapons "unfortunately" jammed when they fired a shot at the suspect.

"Why would we kill Ka Romy? He was a municipal employee. In fact, my men were the first ones to help the victim and rushed him to a nearby hospital," he said.

Appeal

Malabanan's widow also appealed to the media to be sensitive and fair in reporting about her husband.

She said her husband "was just an ordinary farmer fighting for the people's rights to live decently," and not the "former right hand of communist leader Gregorio Rosal" as reported on national radio and several tabloids and broadsheets.

She told the Inquirer that some tabloids even called Ka Romy as a former high-ranking official of the communist-led New People's Army (NPA) operating in Southern Tagalog.

Malabanan feared that the inaccurate media accounts of Romy's killing could endanger the lives of their sons and other family members.

She said such incorrect information could make them likely targets of military and the police.

Malabanan was the chair of Pagkakaisa't Ugnayan ng mga Magbubukid sa Laguna until he suffered from a stroke that paralyzed half of his body in 2001.

Despite the disability, he managed to involve himself in party-list group Bayan Muna and helped Bay Mayor Edwin Ramos in his campaign in the last local elections.

SONY. Sony Ericsson Sony Life Sony Music Magnavision COLUMBIA PICTURES

Buy any Sony product or service that can win you one of these exciting Sony prizes:

Sony Grand Raffle

4 Sony Home Theater Package
(KV-XF25N90 & DAV-C700)

40 Columbia (Sony) Pictures VCD Movie Collection
(10 VCD disc per winner)

4 Sony Ericsson T105 Mobile Phones
(Sony Ericsson T-105)

4 Sony Life Insurance CD and DVD Collection
(10 DVD & 2 CD per winner)

4 Sony Music Meteor Garden Series VCD Collection
(50 VCD disc per winner)

MECHANICS
1. Raffle stubs will be issued to the customer for the following purchases at participating dealers/ outlets
Sony Philippines: For every purchase of Sony Electronic products worth:

P 1,000 - P 25,000 = 1 raffle coupon
P 25,001 - P 50,000 = 2 raffle coupons
P 50,001 - P 75,000 = 3 raffle coupons
P 75,001 - P 100,000 = 4 raffle coupons
P 100,001 - P 125,000 = 5 raffle coupons
P 125,001 - P 150,000 = 6 raffle coupons
P 150,001 - P 175,000 = 7 raffle coupons
P 175,001 - P 200,000 = 8 raffle coupons
P 200,001 - UP = 10 raffle coupons

Sony Ericsson: For every P4,000 purchase of Sony Ericsson products = 1 raffle coupon

Magnavision: For every purchase of Columbia or Sony Pictures Home Entertainment Titles
One (1) VCD or DVD Title = 1 raffle coupon

Sony Music: For every purchase of Sony Music Entertainment Music Titles
One (1) CD or Cassette Title (listed below) = 1 raffle coupon
1. John Mayer - Heavier Things
2 Beyonce Knowles - Dangerously In Love
3. Hilary Duff - Metomorphosis
4. Various Artists - We're Just Friends With Benefits
5. Various Artists - Love Storm OST
6. Various Artists - 80's Replay
7. Nickelback - The Long Road
8. Barbra Streisand - The Movie Album
9. Mandy Moore - Coverage
10. Michael Jacskon - #1s
11 Cyndi Lauper - At Last
12. A1 - The Best of
13 F4 - Meteor Rain
14. Korn - Take a Look at the Mirror
15. The Offspring - Splinter
16. Alice Peacock - Alice Peacock
17. Mariah Carey - The Remixes
18. Hilary Duff - Santa Claus Lane
19. Various Artists - The Fighting Temptations OST
20 Yo-Yo Ma - Obrigado Brazil
21. Switchfoot - The Beautiful Letdown
22. Harry Connick Jr. - Harry for the Holidays
23. Various Artists - Christmas Calling
24. Bette Midler - Bette Midler Sings the Rosemary Clooney Songbook
25. Jennifer Lopez - The Reel Me

2. Fill up the raffle stub and affix your signature then drop it off at drop boxes designated in every articipating dealers /outlets.
3. Promo period is from November 15,2003-January 15, 2004. Deadline for submission of entries is on January 15,2004, 6:00pm
4. Raffle Draw will be held on January 30,2004 , Friday at 2:00pm at Sony Philippines Head Office, 26F Tower 1 The Enterprise Center , 6766 Ayala Avenue cor. Paseo de Roxas , Makati City. The raffle will be done in the presence of a DTI representative
5. Prizes are not convertible to cash.
6. The 20% Tax for prizes exceeding P10,000 will be shouldered by Sony Philippines.
7. A winner can only win once. If a customer's name is drawn more than once, the prize of the bigger value will be awarded.
8. Prizes can be claimed within 60 days from notification after which , prize will be forfeited with prior approval of DTI.
9. Winners will be notified via telephone and registered mail and published in a newspaper of general circulation. Prizes may be claimed upon presentation of a valid ID with picture and with the mail stating their winning prize at the Sony Philippines Head Office, 26F Tower 1 The Enterprise Center, 6766 Ayala Avenue cor. Paseo de Roxas ,Makati City or through other Sony companies specified in the registered mail.
10. There will be a total of 20 winners for this raffle promo wherein 5 Raffle entries per Sony Company will be drawn to win 1 Sony prize each
11. All employees of Sony Philippines . Sony Ericsson, Sonic Music , Columbia (Sony) Pictures, Magnavision dealers/outlets and their relatives up to the second degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from this promotion

Participating Dealers / Outlets:
All Sony Philippines, Inc authorized dealers nationwide
Astrovision Branches, Astro Plus Podium, SM Record Bars , National Bookstore
Odyssey: O Rockwell, O Greenbelt, SM Megamall XL, SM North Edsa XL, SM Bacoor XL, Filinvest XL, SM Manila XL, SM Southmall
Tower Records / Music One: Tower Records Glorietta, Tower Records Alabang, Tower Records Shangri-la, Tower Records Megamall, M1 Quezon Ave., M1 Greenbelt
Redemption Centers:
Head Offices : Sony Philippines Inc. 26F Tower 1 The Enterprise Center , 6766 Ayala Avenue cor. Paseo de Roxas , 1226 Makati City * Sony Ericsson Mobile Communications Int'l AB 7F Octagon Bldg., San Miguel Avenue,Ortigas Center . Pasig City , Metro Manila * Sony Life Insurance (Philippines) corporation 35F PBCom Tower , 6795 Ayala Avenue cor. Rufino St , 1226 Makati City * Sony Music Entertainment (Philippines) Inc. GDC 1A Bldg. 750 Shaw Blvd. Mandaluyong City * Magnavision 103 Main Avenue cor. 16th Avenue Cubao , 1100 Quezon City.

Per DTI-NCR Permit # 3339 Series of 2003.

Only 7 CPP cadres disciplined for bloody purges

From page A1

and say that it is wrong."

For now, the former cadre claims to have sought the forgiveness of some of the survivors and to have achieved "peace of mind."

Yet another former senior cadre accepts responsibility for the OPML: "I am not washing my hands of my sins. We are accountable."

'Perpetrators'

A former member of the Mindanao Commission (Mindacom) declared: "We are the perpetrators."

Asked who should be held accountable for the purges, he said: "The leadership, because of command responsibility. It was accountable. We all are."

A former senior cadre who took part in Kampanyang Ahos, the anti-infiltration campaign in Mindanao, said national and regional party leaders should take the blame.

"The Executive Committee of the CPP Central Committee, the entire Mindanao Commission, the regional committees and the regional executive committees in Mindanao have to be held accountable for Kampanyang Ahos," he said, adding:

"Although some Mindacom members were absent at the 'expanded caretaker committee' meeting, all the Mindacom members were involved in the implementation of Ahos."

The ex-senior cadre pointed out that some members of Mindacom and of the regional and regional executive committees were already engaged in anti-infiltration campaigns even before Ahos was implemented.

"For the anti-infiltration purges in general, the entire party Central Committee, as well as the commissions and regional committees in affected regions, should be held accountable," he said.

Punishment

But despite the errors and the havoc that the purges wrought on the CPP, its Politburo and later its Central Committee meted out disciplinary action to only seven party officers, all of them involved in the OPML.

No other party official who had a hand in other anti-infiltration campaigns like Ahos or Olympia in Metro Manila received disciplinary action. This, according to a member of the CPP Executive Committee, was part of the so-called "political brinkmanship" employed to save the party from further damage.

By the account of a former senior cadre, the Executive Committee member said expelling, suspending or demoting other party officials apart from the seven would leave a leadership vacuum in large parts of the country.

"The issue in Mindanao has become emotional," the committee member was quoted as saying. "The remaining cadres who were involved in Ahos are crying. We will lose cadres [if they are punished]."

In a statement issued on Feb. 5, the Executive Committee said among those with the biggest accountability were officials who broke away from the party, especially in 1992 during "The Second Rectification Movement."

The committee named five of them, but remained silent on other perpetrators still with the CPP who, it said, had already made amends.

"All leading comrades who had individual accountabilities concerning the OPML anti-infiltration hysteria were meted [out] various levels of disciplinary action, the highest being expulsion from the party," the committee said.

FILE photo shows soldiers and civilians offering flowers at a suspected gravesite of CPP purge victims in Candelaria, Quezon. PDI FILE PHOTO/ERIK ARAZAS

'Criminal renegades'

"Most of them fully acknowledged their errors, accepted disciplinary action meted [out to] them, gave their all in repairing the damage that had been wrought, and made rectification. All those involved were assisted in their rehabilitation, including those who did not have serious accountabilities," it said.

Luis Jalandoni, chief negotiator of the National Democratic Front of which the CPP is a member, pinned the blame for Kampanyang Ahos on "criminal renegades," including three members of Mindacom who had left the party.

Jalandoni, who is based in The Netherlands, said in an interview posted on a website in 2002 that the supposed renegades "erroneously ascribed the setbacks being suffered then [1985] by the revolutionary movement in Mindanao to enemy infiltration rather than to the militarist line they were pursuing."

"Because of their purely militarist line, they did not pay attention to mass work, land reform, and other programs that benefit the masses such as literacy, numeracy, health and sanitation," he said.

CPP chair Armando Liwanag did not name names but partly attributed the purges to an "erroneous" line of thought among certain party leaders who espoused quick victory at the expense of painstaking mass work and solid organizing.

In the document titled "Reaffirm Our Basic Principles and Carry the Revolution Forward" dated Dec. 26, 1991, Liwanag said:

"The erroneous current of thought and action has brought ... about the lopsided distribution of cadres and resources, the costly building of urban-based staff organs and top-heavy military staff [which are vulnerable to the enemy], gross reductions of the mass base, the eventual isolation and passivity of the prematurely enlarged and unsustainable armed units, defeats and demoralization in a purely military situation and finally a wild surge of panic like the anti-infiltration hysteria."

Liwanag said the arrests of party leaders, which the proponents of the purges attributed to enemy infiltrators, were a result of the concentration of leading staff organs in the cities where they were "vulnerable to surveillance and punitive actions by the enemy."

In November 1992, the CPP Executive Committee said the "enemy" had arrested since 1988 more than 100 national and regional cadres, including a big number of Central Committee members, mostly in the cities, resulting in "repeated seizures of diskettes and documents containing sensitive information about the party."

RJs and RAs

Liwanag's attacks on the party leaders espousing what he called the "insurrectionist" line led to the breakup of the CPP into the rejectionist (RJ) and reaffirmist (RA) factions in 1992. Those belonging to the RA group are still with the party, while those in the RJ group broke away from it.

As a result, those involved in the anti-infiltration campaigns can be found in both the RJ and RA camps.

A human rights lawyer cautions against blaming the purges only on those still with the CPP.

"We have to point out that, as regard the Left purge, there is enough responsibility or blame to share among certain leaders of both the RA and the RJ factions of the communist or national democratic Left," Soliman M. Santos Jr. said at a forum on the "The Left Purges and their Human Rights Implications."

Santos, regional director for Asia of Geneva Call, an international humanitarian organization devoted to engaging rebel groups on humanitarian norms, said it would be short-sighted to raise the serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law if this action was intended to put the blame on one's opponents within the Left.

"That way, we will be missing the lessons," he said, and noted that the two Left factions had agreed that the anti-infiltration campaigns were characterized by grave abuse of human rights.

Conclusion: Finding closure

More students going underground, says NDF

DAVAO CITY—The number of college students who are going underground is increasing, according to the communist-led National Democratic Front in Mindanao.

In a phone interview with the INQUIRER on Saturday, Jorge Madlos, NDF spokesperson for Mindanao, said that during the 35th-anniversary celebration on Friday of the Communist Party of the Philippines alone, at least 50 college students disclosed their intention to join the New People's Army.

He said most of the students, aged 18 to 24, were from this city and Cagayan de Oro.

Madlos said the students disagreed with the government's policies and that they were frustrated by the state of the country.

"They are still here in our camp undergoing 'exposure,'" he said, adding that the growing interest in the underground movement of people from the urban areas had been boosting the NPA's strength.

This belies the military's claim that the communist insurgency is waning, Madlos said. But he did not say how large the NPA had become.

NPA spokesperson Rigoberto Sanchez accused the Armed Forces of "using civilians and noncombatants as shield" in its effort "to stop the spread of communism."

"This is a cowardly practice by the AFP that the masses and the revolutionary forces strongly condemn, and which necessitates continued [participation] by the people in mass action and the NPA in revolutionary armed struggle," Sanchez said. *Anthony S. Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

How can accountability be pursued?

(Editor's Note: Following are excerpts from a paper delivered by lawyer Cecilia Jimenez at the PATH founding assembly on Aug. 29.)

VARIOUS experiences on approaching armed groups in certain countries have emerged. International humanitarian and human rights groups have also examined these questions, at both policy and operational levels.

One pioneering research on armed group accountability dealt with these "approaches to armed groups." Nine countries, of which the Philippines was one, were studied in terms of the context and the human rights abuses of armed groups. The framework that the study suggests has to do with basic approaches for direct engagement with armed groups in pursuit for their accountability.

1. **Persuasion.** One could approach armed groups by trying to persuade them to collaborate or assist in the various endeavors that would contribute to knowing the truth about the events. Through persuasion, it might also be possible to convince an armed group to acknowledge the gravity of the events and to provide an official apology. The armed group could also assist in exhumation and documentation. Persuasion could be undertaken through dialogue, negotiation and consultation. The use of media, the engagement of constituencies and other tools could also be resorted to. What is important is that through persuasion, the armed group is willing to collaborate because it is in its own interests to do so.

2. **Denunciation.** This approach has been one of the most favored tools of human rights organizations. Public naming and shaming put the credibility of armed groups at stake. By publicly exposing the acts perpetrated, the policies involved and the impunity of the perpetrators and the armed group, the armed group is forced to deal with a campaign against it for those issues. Some of the tools used for this approach are the same tools used in human rights campaigns against violations: media exposure, urgent actions, lobbying, mobilization and institution-building such as the setting up of truth commissions. Political bodies, both national and international, could likewise be tapped into action. The bottom line in public denunciation is to coerce the armed group to adopt an action or policy. Otherwise, it would risk losing its legitimacy.

3. **Prosecution and punishment.** The questions related to the involvement of the state pertains to this approach. This is because it is the state that legitimately has the legal obligation and the authority to undertake prosecution and the punishment of the perpetrators. There is naturally a valid reluctance in using the state apparatus for these purposes. Prosecution and punishment will nevertheless depend not only on the willingness of the survivors, victims and their families, but also on the political will and capability of the state.

For some, it would be a contradiction in the principles of the social movement. For others, it could be the only way.

4. **Working directly with armed groups, including capacity building.** A final approach is directly engaging the armed group itself in order to provide the armed group with the tools to resolve the issue. This would necessarily entail efforts for capacity building. In using this approach, there is an objective of ensuring that the armed group respects international human rights and humanitarian standards, including the right of the survivors, victims and families to know the truth and to obtain justice. It would include working and collaborating directly with the armed group to find solutions to these issues. Obviously, the use of this approach is politically sensitive. It would first of all, in the Philippine context, depend not only on political will and capability but the political space as well. Questions on sincerity and trust are likewise unavoidable.

Victims, kin invoke international humanitarian law

From page A1

law because it is an embodiment of the system that they seek to overthrow, lawyer Cecilia Jimenez noted at the founding assembly of the Peace Advocates for Truth, Justice and Healing (PATH) on Aug. 29.

However, opposition armed groups accept international law because they aspire to take over a territory as a government and to join the international community of states if they succeed, said Jimenez, a Geneva-based human rights consultant and trainor.

NDF

On July 5, 1996, the CPP and the New People's Army, as allied revolutionary organizations in the National Democratic Front, signed the latter's unilateral Declaration of Undertaking to Apply the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and Protocol I of 1977. The NDF declared its accession to Protocol II on Aug. 15, 1991.

Jimenez said agreements that the armed groups themselves had signed could also be used in holding them accountable.

She said the Comprehensive Agreement on Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law between the NDF and the Philippine government was one example.

Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions is applicable to the CPP anti-infiltration campaigns because it is deemed to have achieved the status of international customary law applicable to parties in a domestic armed conflict, Jimenez said.

The article provides the minimum standards that must be respected by all parties to the internal conflict, including armed groups. The standards are meant to protect "persons taking no part in the hostilities" for any reason.

They include members of armed forces, any detainee, regardless of status, under the control of the detaining authority, and even civilians who have directly taken part in hostilities but who are captured and who are then entitled to protection, Jimenez said.

Prohibition

Under Common Article 3, the minimum standard to be followed by all parties to a conflict in relation to any detainee or captured civilian is the absolute prohibition of:

- Violence to life and person, in particular murder of all kinds, mutilation, cruel treatment and torture.
- Taking of hostages.
- Outrage upon personal dignity, in particular humiliating and degrading treatment.
- Passing of sentence and carrying out of execution without previous judgment pronounced by a regularly constituted court, affording all the judicial guarantees which are recognized as indispensable by civilized peoples.

"With this provision, the allegation that a person is a spy or a deep-penetration agent is totally irrelevant," Jimenez said.

"If a spy is caught in the act, it is true that he or she cannot benefit from the status of a prisoner of war that international humanitarian law has elaborated on, particularly under the Third Geneva Convention. And even then, the Third Geneva Convention further provides that such spies caught in the act must be treated with humanity and must not be punished without a fair and regular trial," she said.

Protocol II of the Geneva Conventions, which applies directly to internal conflicts, expands the protection offered by Common Article 3.

"As it is applicable to the Philippine context where the threshold requirement had been reached, the extensive guarantees provided by Protocol II apply to all the parties," Jimenez said.

The "Humane Treatment" guarantees of Protocol II, particularly Article 4 that deals with "Fundamental Guarantees" and Article 5 that deals with "persons whose liberty has been restricted," list the minimum protection guarantees that the victims of the purges could have been provided.

"Under [these] norms, stipulated in Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions as well as relevant provisions of Protocol II, it is clear that armed groups could and should be held accountable for violations of international humanitarian law," Jimenez said.

Jimenez cited current international human rights discussions that look more seriously at why and how armed groups could be held directly accountable under international human rights law.

One approach looks at "duties" under international human rights law, a prime example of which is Article 29 of the Universal Declaration for Human Rights that provides: "Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible."

Another approach, according to Jimenez, looks at the harm to the victim rather than the role of the state in the perpetration of the harm.

Restitution

"This, therefore, looks not only at the protection and restitution of the individual harmed but also at the redress by the non-state actor itself," she said.

One evolving approach that is slowly gaining ground calls for the direct applicability of human rights norms on the actions of the non-state actors, particularly armed groups.

Jimenez cited the UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial executions, which has repeatedly called for armed groups in Algeria and in Sudan to stop the killings, even though the mandate is based on international human rights standards.

The establishment of the International Criminal Court highlighted the further development of international criminal law, Jimenez said.

She said the notion of individual responsibility for the acts perpetrated had been firmly established as the basis for the culpability of the alleged perpetrators, whether they were affiliated or not with the state.

She also said members of armed dissident groups, and even individuals acting on their own behest in most cases, could be held accountable for international crimes.

Jimenez said war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide had been recognized as the principal categories of international crimes.

War crimes cover violations of international customary and treaty law under international humanitarian law and are committed against "the enemy."

Crimes against humanity

Crimes against humanity are directed against civilians or persons who do not take part or no longer take part in armed hostilities. They may be directed, therefore, to members of one's own group.

A crime against humanity involves the perpetration of certain acts—such as murder, torture, slavery, rape or persecution—that are part of a systematic and widespread practice.

The practice must be part of a policy of the authorities or is allowed by them.

Jimenez said isolated acts of inhumanity not part of a pattern could not be considered crimes against humanity.

But an individual may still be guilty of a crime against humanity, even if he or she has perpetrated just a single act, if that is part of a policy or widespread or systematic practice.

Jimenez said offenses categorized as crimes against humanity may be committed by state agents, as well as members of armed groups. Crimes against humanity may be prosecuted even many years after they were committed.

"It behooves us to reflect, based on documentation as well as the testimony of the victims, if the acts perpetrated during the purges could be labeled as war crimes or crimes against humanity," she said.

Based on international standards, the CPP-NPA, the leadership and the perpetrators can be held accountable for the bloody anti-infiltration campaigns, according to Jimenez.

But she issued a caveat: "[A] genuine quest for justice would hold persons responsible for their acts in the purges, wherever these persons may be right now and whatever their roles are at present.

"Otherwise, it would be sheer hypocrisy to hold someone responsible but not another because the latter happens to be in the 'right' group or the 'right' position. The victims of the purges deserve more than this."

Int'l aid pours in for Iranian quake victims

From page A1

States said Saturday it would send 75 tons of medical supplies and about 200 rescue and medical experts.

The United States has no diplomatic relations with Iran and last year President George W. Bush said the country was part of an "axis of evil" with prewar Iraq and North Korea.

"We greatly welcome any assistance from the United States," said Akbar Alavi, the governor of the provincial capital, Kerman city, on Saturday.

Forty-five foreign planes, including America's, have landed in Iran bearing aid, the chief spokesperson of Iranian Civil Aviation, Jaafar Poor Sadeghian, told the official Islamic Republic News Agency.

The inhabitants of Bam complained of a shortage of drinking water on Sunday. Relief workers were handing out bottled water, but there was not enough.

Looting

The Associated Press saw at least four young men looting three shops in the city center. Two teenagers ran from the one store holding packets of biscuits.

Interior Minister Abdolvahed Mousavi Lari told the AP that 31 temporary police stations were being set up around the city to ensure security.

Almost all the thousands of homeless did manage to sleep in tents Saturday night, unlike Friday night when most had only blankets between themselves and the sky in temperatures close to freezing.

The interior ministry estimated the number of injured at 30,000.

Bam, in southeast Iran about 1,015 km from Tehran, suffered such extreme damage because most of the buildings are made of unreinforced mud brick and the quake was centered only about 16 km outside the city, said Harley Benz, a USGS seismologist.

"The communities in this part of Iran are really not resilient to earthquakes," said Benz, head of the National Earthquake Information Center in Golden, Colorado. "It's very sad and unfortunate."

THE HAND of a victim is covered by rubble in the city of Bam in southeastern Iran after a powerful earthquake hit the region Friday. At least 20,000 were killed and 30,000 were injured in the earthquake, with more casualties feared. EPA

Aftershocks registered as high as 5.3, according to the geophysics institute of Tehran University.

Searchers carried the injured in their arms, on stretchers and in the backs of trucks, seeking help outside Bam's ruined hospitals or at the airport while awaiting evacuation to Kerman, the provincial capital about 195 km away, or other cities.

About 150 people, including an infant, were pulled alive from the rubble, Revolutionary Guards officer Masoud Amiri said. The baby was buried more than 24 hours but was listed in stable condition at a hospital, he said.

Iran opened its air space to all planes carrying emergency supplies and waived visa requirements for foreign relief personnel.

"The disaster is far too huge for us to meet all of our needs," President Mohammad Khatami said.

Bare hands

The leader of an Iranian relief team, Ahmad Najafi, said he feared the toll could reach 40,000. On one street alone, 200 bodies were extracted from the rubble in a single hour on Saturday, he said.

In another part of Bam on Saturday, a gray-bearded man in his 50s, wearing the white turban common to rural villages in this southeastern corner of Iran, watched with resignation as four men dug with their bare hands and a single shovel.

What once was his home was a flattened pile of rubble and dust. He pointed to where the bedrooms should have been, seemingly resigned that none of his three teenage children or his wife would be found alive.

He fainted as he spotted a slender hand protruding from a red pajama sleeve in the debris.

Behind him, the body of a girl in her teens was excavated and quickly covered with a blanket. Then the bodies of his sons and a woman in her 40s were found.

No one was alive.

In another neighborhood, a man interrupted Interior Minister Lari as he spoke to reporters Saturday.

"My father is under the rubble," the man said, tears rolling down his face. "I've been asking for help since yesterday, but nobody has come to help me. Please help me. I want my father alive."

Lari tried to calm the man and asked an aide to help him.

"There is not a standing building in the city. Bam has turned into a wasteland," the minister said.

The earthquake collapsed the walls of the local prison, allowing all 800 inmates to escape, guard Vahid Masoumpour said.

The quake destroyed most of Bam's citadel—a medieval fortress that is the city's best-known structure. The tallest section, including a distinctive square tower, crumbled like a sand castle.

The UN cultural agency, Unesco, considered declaring the citadel a protected World Heritage Site.

Some of the citadel's walls were still standing on Saturday, but they were damaged.

"My grief is twofold," said Reza Husseini, a 25-year-old archaeology student, as tears streaked through the dust that covered his hair and his bruised face. "I've lost two members of my family, and I've lost my history, my citadel."

Iran has a history of devastating earthquakes, including one of magnitude 7.3 that killed about 50,000 people in northwest Iran in 1990. *AP*

RP to send rescue team

THE SUBIC Bay Metropolitan Authority search and rescue team is to be dispatched to join an international humanitarian mission to Iran, SBMA Chair Felicito Payumo said in a statement.

The elite team will be composed of firefighters, doctors, nurses and security personnel and will fly in life-saving tools, including the so-called "jaws of life" hydraulic machine to lift rubble and search for survivors.

The National Disaster Coordinating Council is currently preparing the deployment of the Philippine contingent. *AFP*

Prosecutors fear Estrada won't return

From page A1

Another prosecutor, Marichu Lambino, said the decision by the court was "highly irregular," saying Estrada's alleged crime theoretically carried the death penalty and did not qualify him for bail.

"Maybe they think that this is a Christmas gift for Erap, but they missed the whole point," she said, arguing that police officers who would accompany Estrada to the United States will not even be allowed to carry firearms.

"They can't even touch Erap while he's in US territory. If they try to limit his movements, they can be sued for grave coercion," Lambino said. "The court has allowed a person charged with a capital offense to escape. That's what it did."

President Macapagal-Arroyo has welcomed the decision, maintaining that Estrada was ailing and should be allowed to get treatment abroad, given he was a former President.

But critics have claimed that Estrada's trip was part of Ms Macapagal's move to disarm her political enemies ahead of the May 2004 polls, in which she is expected to seek a second term. Estrada remains the opposition's de facto leader and still wields considerable influence.

US visa

The leftist political group Anakpawis called on the US Embassy to deny Estrada's expected application for an entry visa.

Crispin Beltran, chair of the labor sector-based party Anakpawis, said the United States would be abetting the escape of a criminal on trial if it gave Estrada the travel document.

"No one should buy this (humanitarian grounds), especially not from an ex-President who continues to be pampered and petted by the current administration," Beltran said in a statement yesterday.

He said Malacañang's promise to assist Estrada to get a US visa should be the "final straw—the last cut that will sever the ties between Macapagal-Arroyo and her remaining People Power II allies." *Reports from AFP and Norman Bordadora*

No way, GMA says . . .

From page A1

It's against the law and we'll enforce the law," Ms Macapagal, who is seeking a fresh six-year term in the May balloting, said in a talk with reporters.

The communist-led National Democratic Front recently said that all candidates, including Ms Macapagal, would be required to pay a "permit-to-campaign" fee so they would be allowed to campaign in areas controlled by the New People's Army.

Based on its new guidelines and policies for the 2004 elections, the NDF said candidates would have to pay the fee in full before they are issued permits.

The NDF, according to a rebel spokesperson, is doing away with the practice of allowing candidates to pay half of the fee before the elections and the other half after the counting. Losers usually no longer pay the unpaid balance, he said.

Lt. Gen. Rodolfo Garcia, Armed Forces spokesperson, yesterday said the NPA was "hallucinating."

"I think they are only joking," Garcia said. "We're going to run them down."

The Philippine National Police also urged candidates not to pay the communist rebels any money, saying the PNP had enough men to secure politicians who would campaign in rebel areas.

Deputy Director General Virtus Gil, the PNP chief for operations, said candidates need only request security and the PNP would assign officers to accompany them during campaign sorties in NPA guerrilla zones.

Gil made the assurance in the wake of pronouncements by the NDF that both police and the military could not prevent communist rebels from collecting permit-to-campaign fees from politicians.

"I beg to disagree," he told the INQUIRER. "Our provincial commands have enough men to secure all candidates who will request security."

Gil said PNP officials overseeing police operations and projects in Mindanao had also dismissed as "exaggerated" the claim made by Jorge Madlos, NDF spokesperson, that the NPA collected P40 million from candidates in southern Philippines during the 2001 elections.

He said the areas controlled by the NPA were not that extensive.

"We're talking of just few far-flung areas here, not an entire province or region," he explained.

According to Gil, communist rebels usually collect PTC fees in February and March when campaigning gets under way. Rebels send letters to candidates, informing them that they have to pay a certain amount before they can campaign in NPA-controlled areas.

Candidates for governor are usually charged P500,000, those running for a congressional seat between P300,000 and P500,000, and those for mayor between P50,000 and P300,000.

"This practice would not flourish if candidates would not give in," Gil said. "Since their only concern is their safety from the NPA, the PNP has a solution to that." *Reports from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Christian V. Esguerra*

MITSUBISHI COLOR FILM
SOLID GOLD COLOR FILM
Just buy any Mitsubishi Color Film or Solid Gold Film (12/24/36 EXP) and get a chance to win any of these exciting prizes
i-click at manalo
GRAND PRIZE: P 100,000 1 Winner
P 50,000 2 Winners
P 25,000 3 Winners
National Refrigerator 5 winners per draw
3D Electric Oven w/ Grill 50 winners per draw
Electown (21") 53.34 cm. Color TV w/ built-in DVD Player 4 winners per draw
Panasonic VCD Mini Component 3 winners per draw
A-Plus Industrial Fan 50 winners per draw
Hyundai VCD / CD / MP3 Player 50 winners per draw
Plus bring Home Instant Prizes:
3R / 4R Photo Album, Mitsubishi ballpens, 8R Enlargement, 1 copy of 5R, Free Developing charge, 2 pcs. wallet size studio shot, P10 / P20 rebate
Promo Period: Dec. 1, 2003 - May 31, 2004
Per DTI NCR Permit No.2873 Series of 2003

2 firsts scored in 'Gabi ng Parangal'

By Marinel R. Cruz

SEXY stars Aubrey Miles and Ara Mina belt out a Tagalog song in their Filipiniana presentation at the awards rites at the Philippine International Convention Center.

MARICEL Soriano: Plum prize for a spinster role in "Filipinas."

PHOTOS BY JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

VICTOR Neri shows off his trophy as festival's Best Supporting actor for his role in "Filipinas."

MARK Meily: The gamble paid off for the producer of "Crying Ladies."

TWO "FIRSTS" occurred on Saturday night's "Gabi ng Parangal" of the 29th Metro Manila Film Festival 2003.

First-time feature film director Mark Meily won as Best Director for Unitel-Basfilm Pictures' "Crying Ladies," about three professional mourners in Chinatown paid to cry during Chinese funerals and burials.

The film also won the highly coveted best picture award and a cash prize of P500,000.

Another first-time winner was actor Victor Neri, who bagged the best supporting award for his role as the activist Emman in "Filipinas."

Neri beat veteran actors Ricky Davao and Bembol Roco for the best supporting trophy.

Veteran actress Maricel Soriano won the festival's best actress award for her role as the spinster Yolanda Filipinas in Viva Films' family saga "Filipinas," directed by Joel Lamangan.

Soriano beat the likes of Susan Roces, Sharon Cuneta, Lorna Tolentino and Elizabeth Oropesa for the best actress trophy.

Most awards

Meily's "Crying Ladies," starring megastar Sharon Cuneta, romped off with most of the awards.

Unitel's Tony Gloria, who also produced the critically acclaimed "American Adobo," took a risk on Meily and his unusual, but Palanca award-winning screenplay "Bayad Luha" on which the movie was based.

The veteran television commercial director told the INQUIRER after the awards rites that "I was really nervous (after) seeing Jeffrey Jeturian's 'Bridal Shower.' I (also) know how good Erik Matti ('Mano Po 2') and Joel Lamangan ('Filipinas') are."

Gloria said he is grateful to "two very important persons: Sharon (Cuneta) for taking the challenge in doing something different, and for Mark who wrote a very refreshing story."

"Crying Ladies" also gave actor Eric Quizon the best actor award, Hilda Koronel the best supporting actress award and Julio Pacheco the best child actor award.

Top grosser

But this year's top grosser, the late komiks novelist Mars Ravelo's fantasy-adventure "Captain Barbell," produced by Premier Productions, went home without any award, even in the special effects category in which it was a strong contender for the flying sequences of its masked hero.

"Filipinas" won for Viva Films the Gatpuno Antonio Villegas Cultural Award and a P750,000 cash prize. The film on the struggles of a typical Filipino family was also awarded the third best picture trophy and a P250,000 cash prize.

Roy Iglesias bagged the best screenplay award for "Filipinas."

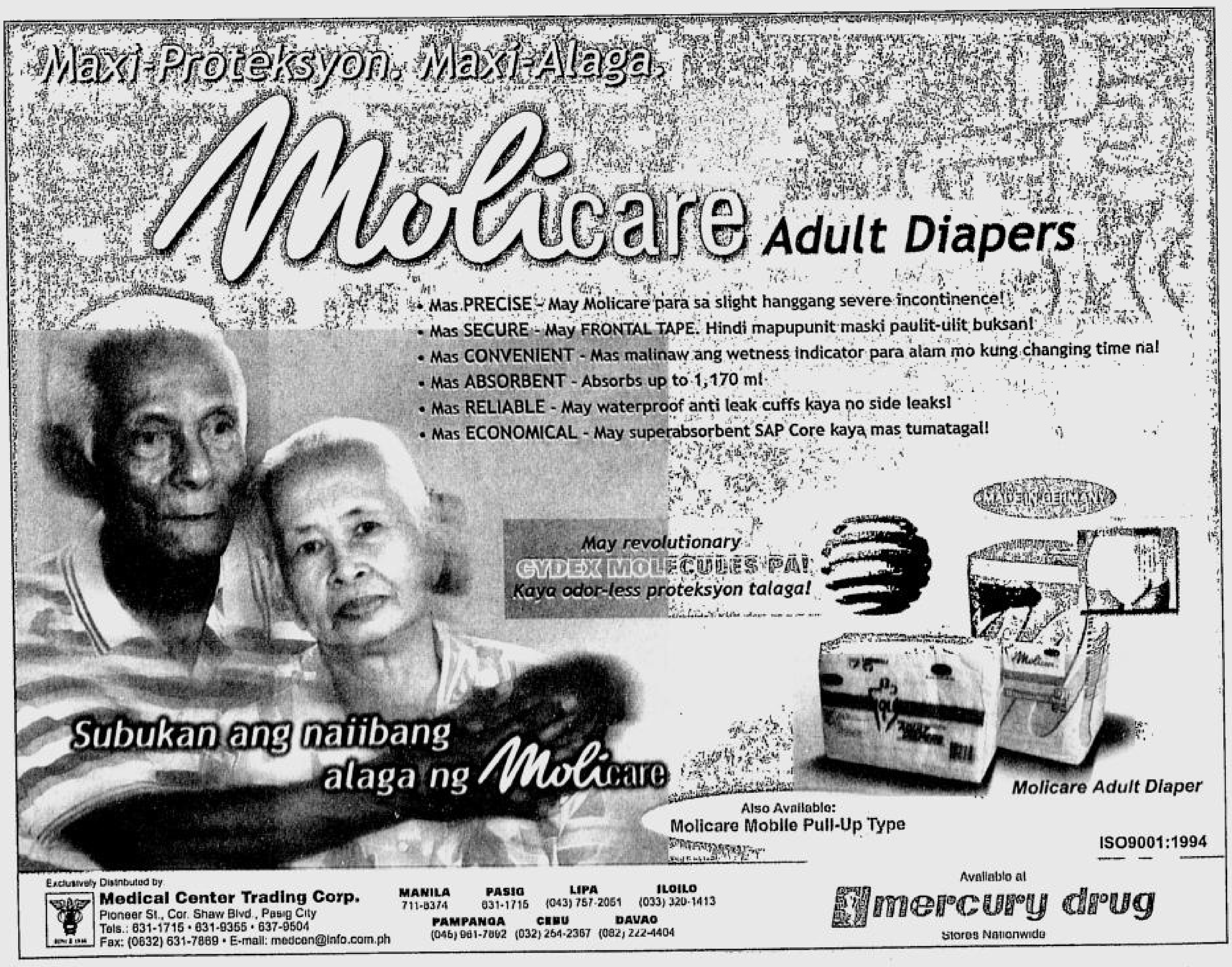
He also won the best story award along with Regal Films producer Lily Monteverde for "Mano Po 2," the story of a Chinese patriarch with three wives. The movie also bagged the second best picture award and a P500,000 cash prize. It also won the People's Choice award for best picture given by the cellular phone service provider Smart, which held a popularity survey.

Smart subscribers were asked to vote by text messaging their pick for the People's Choice award for best actor, which Richard Gomez won for his part in "Filipinas," and the People's Choice best actress, which Cuneta bagged for her role in "Crying Ladies."

Gil Portes' "Homecoming" was awarded the most gender sensitive film and a cash prize of P500,000 by the Quezon City government. The movie, which shows how a small Filipino community coped with the dreaded Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) also won the best theme song award.

Director Jose Javier Reyes' "Malikmata," won awards for best visual effects, best sound recording, best editing and best musical score.

Director Tony Reyes' "Fantastic Man," produced by OctoArts Films and M-Zet Productions, won for best makeup.



Maxi-Proteksyon. Maxi-Alaga.

Molicare Adult Diapers

- Mas PRECISE - May Molicare para sa slight hanggang severe incontinence!
- Mas SECURE - May FRONTAL TAPE. Hindi mapupunit maski paulit-ulit buksan!
- Mas CONVENIENT - Mas malinaw ang wetness indicator para alam mo kung changing time na!
- Mas ABSORBENT - Absorbs up to 1,170 ml
- Mas RELIABLE - May waterproof anti leak cuffs kaya no side leaks!
- Mas ECONOMICAL - May superabsorbent SAP Core kaya mas tumatagal!

MADE IN GERMANY

May revolutionary CYDEX MOLECULES PA! Kaya odor-less proteksyon talaga!

Subukan ang naiibang alaga ng Molicare

Molicare Adult Diaper

Also Available:
Molicare Mobile Pull-Up Type

ISO9001:1994

Exclusively Distributed by
Medical Center Trading Corp.
Pioneer St., Cor. Shaw Blvd., Pasig City
Tels.: 631-1715 • 631-9355 • 637-9504
Fax: (0632) 631-7869 • E-mail: medcon@info.com.ph

MANILA 711-8374 PASIG 631-1715 LIPA (043) 757-2051 ILOILO (033) 320-1413
PAMPANGA (045) 961-7892 CEBU (032) 254-2367 DAVAO (082) 222-4404

Available at
mercury drug
Stores Nationwide

Robbers hit school

TIGHT watch on banks, streets and shopping malls? Yesterday, robbers took advantage of the school break and barged into a high school in Navotas.

About 2:30 p.m., school janitor Rodolfo Arella, 67, went to the Kaunlaran High School in Dagat-Dagatan, North Bay Boulevard South to do his work but noticed that the gate of the school's DPWH building had been forcibly opened.

When he checked inside, he found that the teachers' cabinets and table lockers had been opened and the valuables there taken.

As of press time, police could not give an estimate of the valuables stolen. *Edson Castro Tandoc Jr.*

Cubao mart stalls razed

ABOUT P500,000 worth of property was lost after a 30-minute fire razed several market stalls in Cubao, Quezon City the other night.

The fire broke out about 6:30 p.m. in a "balut" stockhouse on Eastwood Street, 15th Avenue and rapidly spread to nearby grocery and dry goods stores.

Nobody was reported injured. At least six stalls were burned. *Edson Tandoc Jr.*

MAYORAL BET
Mrs. Imelda Tobias Aguilar (seated), files her candidacy for mayor of Las Piñas, as her husband, Mayor Vergel "Nene" Aguilar (in red shirt) and other town officials look on.

METROBRIEFS

Guard found dead

A SECURITY guard of Goodwill Bookstore in Glorietta Mall, Makati City, was found dead on duty early Saturday morning. Prisco Malaza Jr., 31, of No. 59 Mauling Creek, Lower Bicutan, Taguig, was found lying face down near his post inside the bookstore at 8:10 a.m. Police said the victim was discovered by a janitor and two other security guards patrolling the area. Security guard Gina Lopez told the police that she called upon Malaza when she discovered that the bookstore's steel gate was still locked but got no answer. Police said the victim could have died from cardiac arrest or "bangungot." *Margaux Ortiz*

Appeal against dismissal

FORMER Manila City Jail Warden Supt. Romeo Ogoy has asked the Quezon City Regional Trial Court to stop Interior and Local Government Secretary Joey Lina Jr. from dismissing him from service. The dismissal order against Ogoy stemmed from the complaint of grave misconduct and gross neglect of duty filed before the DILG in connection with the alleged "deliberate and wanton disregard of procedure" in not transferring inmate Wu Tuan Yuan, alias Peter Co, from the Manila City Jail to the New Bilibid Prison. In his petition, Ogoy claimed the department's resolution and the subsequent memorandum that called for the immediate implementation of his dismissal were "issued with grave abuse of discretion amounting to lack of jurisdiction." *Tina Santos*

Ink refilling station robbed

THIEVES on Saturday carted away goods worth about P1 million from an ink refilling station and a neighboring Korean appliance store in Caloocan City. Police identified the establishments as the Ink for Less and the Korean Surplus Center, both located on 10th Avenue, Grace Park. Investigation showed that the suspects destroyed the plastic roofing of the appliance store, crawled through the ceiling, and got down at the ink station before ransacking the appliance store later. *Tina Santos*

RMHS Batch '71 reunion

MEMBERS of Batch '71 of Ramon Magsaysay High School in España, Manila, will hold a reunion on April 17, 2004, at the Camp Aguinaldo Officers Club. The reunion, dubbed "71@50: A Reunion of Friends," will introduce the batch's scholars for school year 2004-2005 as well as give recognition to batch members who have excelled in their chosen careers. For details, please call any of the following: Fenina Tuparan-Deang at 9219745 or 0917-6239300, Fe Nano-Dy-Liacco at 6458993 or 0916-4120462, Alex Arellano at 6554287 or 0918-9193235, Freddie Mercado at 7836846/493-5378, or Arsenio 'Bobit' Bautista at 7498254 or 9019-6498572.

THE BOMB drill's actors attract a large crowd. JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

Bomb drill stumps Divisoria shoppers

By Tarra Quismundo

AN EXPLOSION was heard in the heart of Divisoria. Then sirens.

Shortly after, men in uniform came to rescue dozens of "casualties," and cordon off the corner of Soler Street and C.M. Recto Avenue, which terrorists had "attacked."

Yesterday was Niños Inocentes, a day when people pulled jokes on others, in commemoration of the Biblical escape of the child Jesus from the murderous hunt of King Herod.

And the Western Police District could have fooled everybody when it staged a bomb drill in Divisoria between 2 and 3 p.m.

WPD Director Pedro Bulaong called yesterday's field exercise as a "bomb simulation with mass casualty."

"This is to show how prepared our police are for a similar emergency situation," Bulaong told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

During the drill, emergency response units of the WPD, including the Explosives and Ordnance Demolition Unit, Special Weapons and Tactics, Scene of the Crime Office, Manila's Bureau of Fire Protection, mobile patrol units, paramedics, investigators and beat policemen, came in full force and geared for the drill.

"We just tested the capability of our reaction units," related Bulaong.

He said that the drill was part of the WPD's preparation for the New Year's Eve celebration, when people are likely to get injured by firecracker explosions.

Vendors decry steep price rise

By Margaux Ortiz, Edson Tandoc Jr. and Tarra Quismundo

THE PRICES of goods are too much.

No, that is not our average market-goer complaining, but market vendors decrying the rise in the prices of goods.

"We do not expect to make much anymore," said Gigi Tadeo, 57, who has been selling pork at the Quinta Market in Manila for 20 years.

She said the price of pork began to rise in the first week of December, when it used to be P120 per kilo. Currently, it's P125 to P130.

No more buyers

At that price, Tadeo said, many people already stopped buying pork by the kilo. "There are people who buy only by the gram," she explained.

"Before, I used to sell the meat of four pigs. Now, I can't even sell one!" she exclaimed.

With the slump in sales come the crash in the vendor's profit, the meat dealer said. She said she used to earn P500. Now, it's P300.

Another meat dealer, Feliza Menez, blame meat suppliers for the price hike.

No clear reason

"We do not understand why the prices have been going up. (Dealers) tell us that there is a shortage but we don't see any," said Menez, who gets her meat from Tarlac and Batangas.

The situation is reportedly similar in the case of beef, the price of which now ranges from P160 to P185 in four markets surveyed by the INQUIRER.

The markets surveyed were the Guadalupe market in Makati City, Quinta and Paco markets in Manila and the Nepa-Q-Mart and Glori's Supermart in Quezon City.

Menez appealed to the government to investigate the price hike, saying their plight is becoming more and more "unbearable."

While pork and beef dealers doubt a shortage was pushing prices up, chicken dealers believe that an "abnormal lack" of supply was putting pressure on the price of chicken.

Stopped imports

Dealers and retailers blame the government's decision not to import chicken. But some believe that local producers are hoarding to manipulate chicken prices, which now range from P120 to P130.

Even the price of tilapia, once endorsed by President Macapagal-Arroyo as the fish for the masses, has gone up by P20 to P85 per kilo.

The prices of fish and vegetables have not escaped the upward trend. Their prices have jumped up by an average of P20 per kilo.

What is aggravating the situation of the vendors are the rise in other expenses, such as rental and the electricity rate.

Rising costs

Linda, a meat vendor at the Q-Mart, said her stall's daily rental has increased from P352 in November to the current P404.

And their hands are tied.

Zema dela Cruz, a fish vendor at the Gloris said they could not jack up their prices even if they needed to. "Otherwise our customers will no longer buy," De la Cruz said in Filipino.

Worse, they are the ones who get the blame from consumers.

A chicken vendor at the Q-Mart said they absorb the ire of customers, some of whom accuse them of being "opportunists."

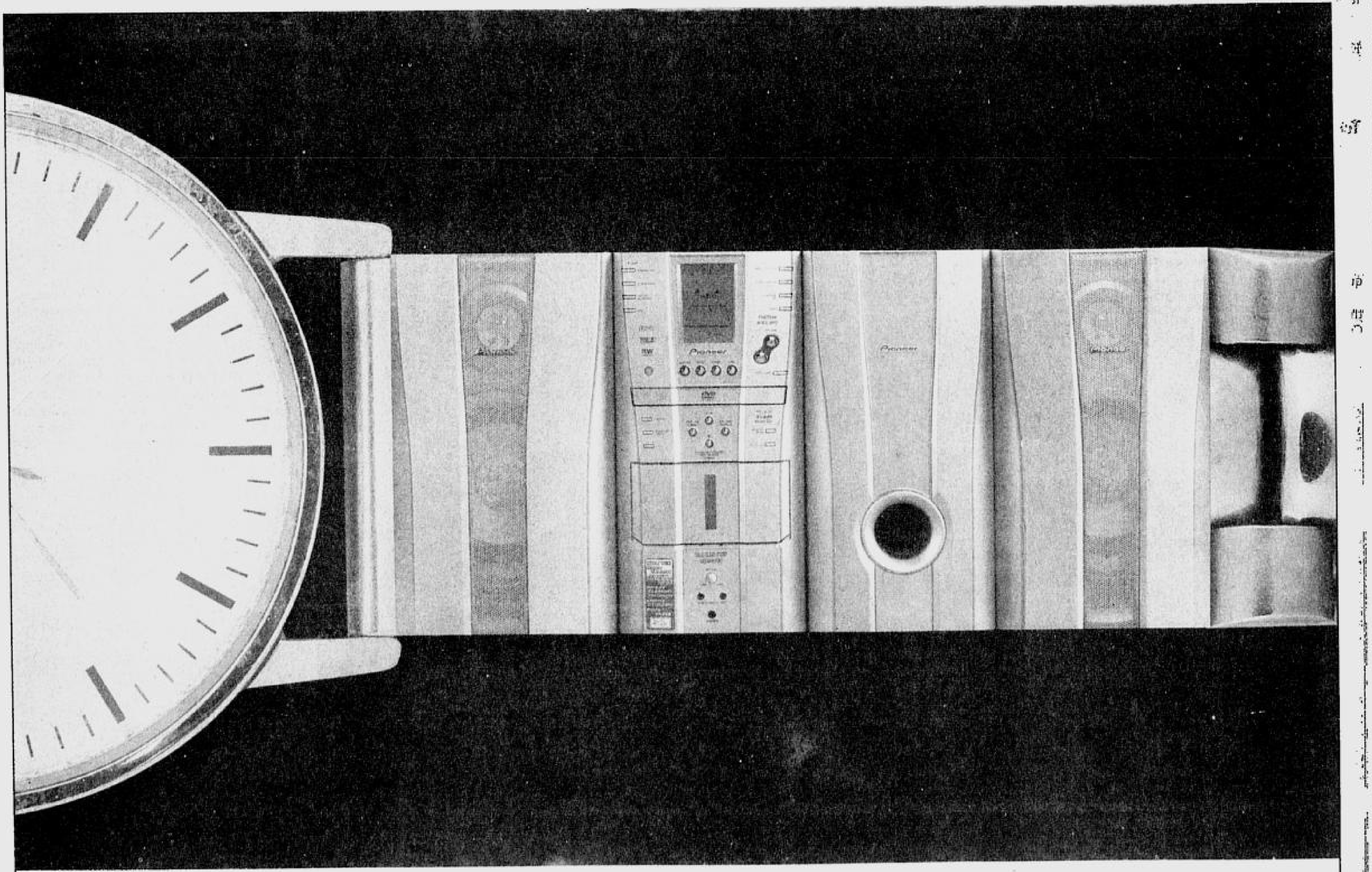
Spare tire repair job kills driver

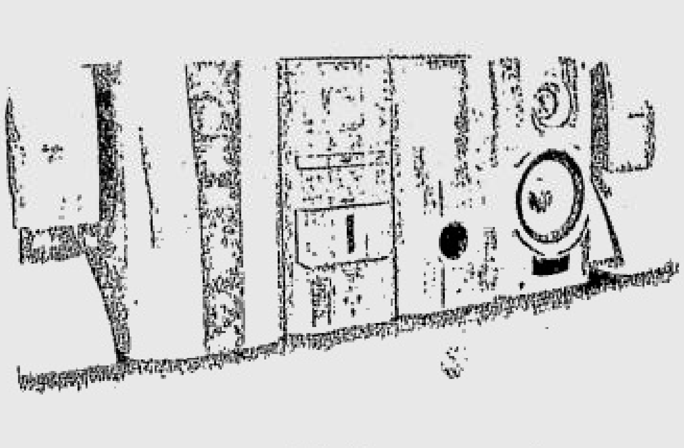
A DRIVER was killed, while a vulcanizing shop helper was injured after the spare tire they were repairing suddenly burst, hurling metal parts into their heads.

Nicandro Edison Reynon, 40, jeepney driver of Greenfields I, Novaliches, died of severe head injuries, while helper Kevin Torselino of the King Tire Supply and Vulcanizing Shop in Quirino Highway is still being treated at the Lanting Hospital, police said yesterday.

Police said Torselino was replacing the lock of the spare tire on Saturday afternoon when suddenly, the tire burst, sending metal locks and other metal parts flying.

The metal parts smashed onto the victims' heads, police said. *Edson Castro Tandoc Jr.*





Round the clock DVD enjoyment.

EV61DVD

It's time for hip entertainment with the new EV61DVD from Pioneer. Get up-to-the-minute viewing pleasure with a stylish 2nd generation mini-component system you definitely can't resist. Listen in style to the smooth sounds delivered by its 5.1 audio system with sub-woofer. The new EV61DVD from Pioneer. It's chic entertainment way ahead of its time.

Pioneer sound.vision.soul

DVD VIDEO

Available at leading appliance stores. For more inquiries contact 852-0033; Fax: 851-3428; Email: ingme@compass.com.ph or visit us at www.pioneer.com.sg

SUERTRES 4 0 9 (In exact order)

SUPERLOTTO 6/49 1 10 18 24 26 35

Robinsons Supermarket

Robinsons Choice

with

bring you... Engrandeng Pamasko Para sa Pamilya!

November 3, 2003 - January 15, 2004

Every P300 grocery purchase gives you a chance to win over a million worth of prizes!

2 Honda City Cars

HONDA CITY 1.3 A MT

3 Dream Home Showcases

at stake in the GRAND DRAW!

Bedroom Showcase

Citibeds BBB20140B Queen-size, Bed Frame 1BRS0252A, 2 Pillows, 1 Set Beddings, Side Table, Table Lamp CBLA0950, Kelvinator (1.0HP) .746 KWH Aircon

Kitchen Showcase

La Germania Gas Range 531 WRS, Whirpool Microwave Oven AWH-542, Standard Blender SJB-350, National Rice Cooker SR-WR18HBN, National Refrigerator B703D

Entertainment Showcase

Sony (21") 53.34 cm. Flat TV KV-HA21N70, Sony DVD / Compo & Speaker System MHC-W288

Plus thousands of treats to be given away everytime you use your pamaskong coupons.

also in cooperation with

Chippy • PH Care Feminine Wash • Adidas Deo Spray

Robinsons Supermarket:
- Robinsons Galleria
- Robinsons Place Manila
- Robinsons Place Imus
- Robinsons Town Mall Los Banos
- Robinsons Place Cebu
- Robinsons Place Bacolod
- Robinsons Place Iloilo
- Metropolis Star Alabang
- Tutuban Center
- Target Mall, Sta. Rosa, Laguna
- Circle C Center, Congressional
- Malabon Citisquare
- Nepo Mall, Angeles, Pampanga

Robinsons Choice:
- Olympic Heights, Eastwood City

See Posters & Flyers for details.

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 3239 Series of 2003

Police firearms muzzled

By Edson Tandoc Jr.

A HEART-TO-HEART talk.

This is the method which Caloocan City police chief Benjardi Mantele hopes to try to discourage his men from firing their guns during the New Year celebration.

He told the INQUIRER yesterday that he would have a "heart-to-heart talk" with his men in today's inspection at the city's police stations.

On Christmas Day, two policemen from the city's Task Force North were arrested for allegedly firing their guns in front of a store.

The policemen, who were reportedly drunk, even resisted arrest and wounded a fellow policeman and a 20-year-old man.

The National Capital Regional Police Office (NCRPO) has earlier warned policemen against indiscriminately firing their guns to welcome the New Year.

In the past, innocent people, including children, were killed or injured by stray bullets fired during holiday celebrations.

Thus, the NCRPO ordered the five police districts in the metropolis to "conduct a showdown inspection of personnel and their respective firearms before Dec. 31 and immediately thereafter."

NCRPO Director Ricardo de Leon said yesterday that he was studying the re-implementation of wrapping the muzzles of policemen's guns with masking tape to make sure that these do not use the firearms unlawfully.

Northern Police District Director Marcelino Franco doubted whether taping the muzzles of policemen's guns would be enough to stop them from greeting the New Year with blasts from their firearms.

He said proper information dissemination and strict inspection would help.

Mantele also said that what was more important was the commitment of policemen to set good examples.

Policemen who would be proven guilty of violating the prohibition face dismissal from the service.

Cop arrested by fellow cop

By Edson Tandoc Jr.

THIS is a police story.

A policeman was arrested by fellow policemen in Quezon City after he allegedly pointed a gun at another lawman yesterday morning.

PO2 Jeffrey Leyva, 31, detailed at Camp Crame, was arrested on the complaint of SPO1 Jose Diaz of the Cubao Police Station.

A report from the Central Police District said that at 12:15 a.m., Diaz was driving his jeep along St. Mary Street, Cubao, when Leyva, who was on a motorcycle, blocked his way.

For unknown reasons, Leyva pulled out a .45-caliber pistol and fired three times in the air.

The Camp Crame-based lawman then allegedly pointed the firearm at Diaz.

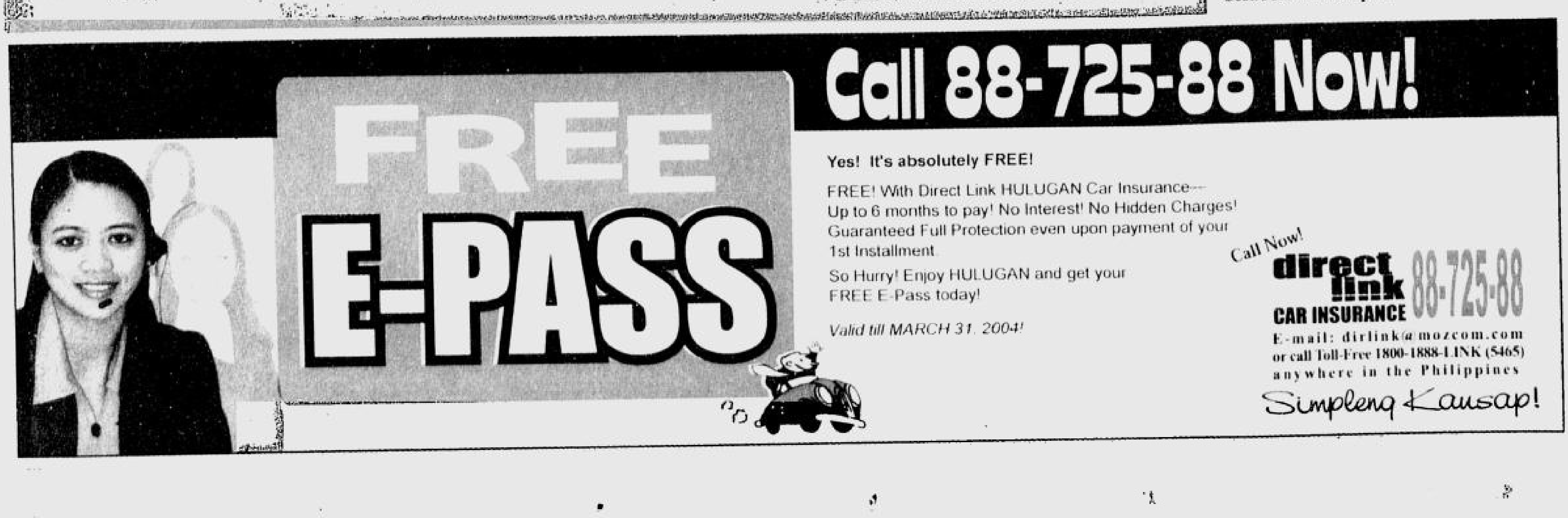
After the incident, Diaz immediately sought help from the Cubao Police Community Precinct 1.

PO3 Arsenio Carraveo and PO3 Joseph Gapasin responded and caught up with Leyva.

But the suspect policeman reportedly resisted arrest and even pointed his gun at the policemen.

After a brief negotiation, the Carraveo and Gapasin managed to disarm the suspect and arrest him.

Leyva was drunk when the incident happened, case investigator PO2 Regundina Sosa's said in his report.



FREE E-PASS

Call 88-725-88 Now!

Yes! It's absolutely FREE!

FREE! With Direct Link HULUGAN Car Insurance—
Up to 6 months to pay! No Interest! No Hidden Charges!
Guaranteed Full Protection even upon payment of your 1st Installment.

So Hurry! Enjoy HULUGAN and get your FREE E-Pass today!

Valid till MARCH 31, 2004!

Call Now!

direct link CAR INSURANCE 88-725-88

E-mail: dirlink@mozcom.com
or call Toll-Free 1800-1888-LINK (5465)
anywhere in the Philippines

Simpleng Kausap!

SPORTS

E-mail: pr_sports@inquirer.com.ph

Editor **Teddyvic S. Melendres**
Assistant Editor **Edwin M. Villanueva**

SPORTS TV
Compiled by L. Manguiat

BASKETBALL: NBA-Celtics vs Lakers; 10:30 a.m. (r-10 p.m.); Solar Sports; Blazers vs Cavs; 7 p.m.; IBC 13—Boston and LA relive their rivalry while Cleveland faces Portland

US NCAA-ACC; 6 p.m.; Solar Sports—Catch the future stars in one of the collegiate ranks' toughest conferences.

Schedules subject to change without prior notice.

PBA HOPEFULS

De Ocampo to head big men in draft

By June Navarro

MORE than a dozen more Philippine Basketball Association aspirants are anticipated to come in and meet today's deadline for the Annual Rookie Draft on Jan. 16 at the Glorietta Activity Center.

Among the impressive names expected to submit their applications are big men Ranidel de Ocampo, Irvin Sotto and Marc Pingris, all members of the RP men's basketball team that won the gold recently in the Southeast Asian Games in Vietnam.

These guys will join national teammates Rich Alvarez (Ateneo), Wesley Gonzales (Ateneo), Gary David Ocampo (Lyceum) and James Yap (UE) in the Draft.

Philippine Basketball League players Gerard Jones, Eric de la Cuesta, Aldwyn Espiritu, Tristan Codamon, Nino Gelig and Lou Gatumbato are also expected to test their market value in the rookie pool.

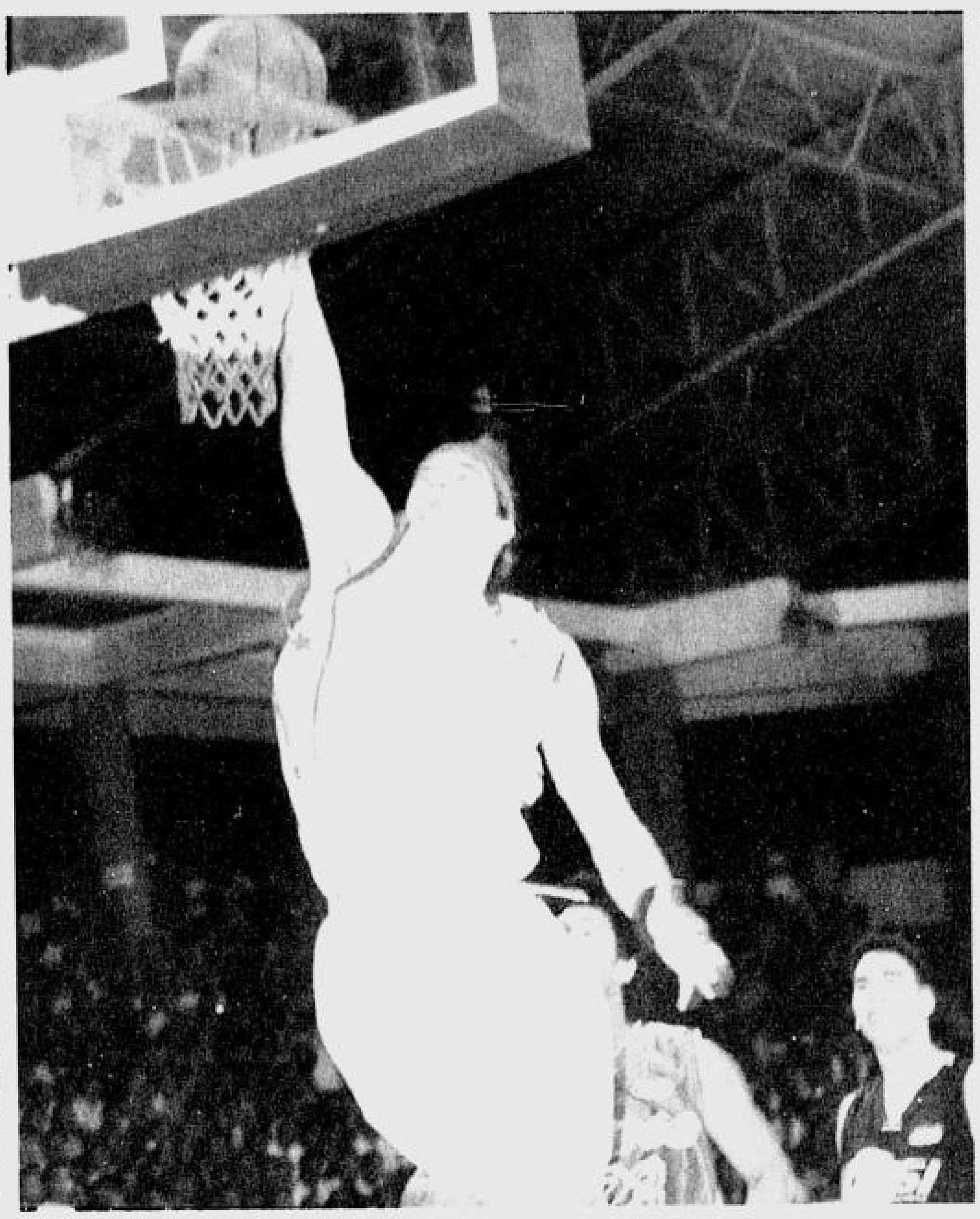
This list will add up to the 24 early birds who submitted their application forms as early as last week.

Aside from the national players, collegiate standouts Paul Artadi (UE), Rhagnee Sinco (FEU), Carlo Sharma (DLSU), Manuel Ramos (DLSU), Arnold Booker (UE), Ronald Cuan (DLSU), Chris Quimpo (ADMU), Willie Wilson (DLSU), Nelbert Omolon (PCU), Bernzon Franco (PCU) and Alvin Pua (SSC) have joined the Draft.

Only two new Fil-foreign players—Joachim Gunter Thoss and Richard Peter Benitez Michael—have tossed their hat into the rookie pool, the lowest turnout of Fil-fors since the influx of foreign-breed cagers in 1997.

Other hopefuls are playmaker Manuel Huelar of the now-defunct Metropolitan Basketball Association's Negros Slashers, former Letran Knight Francis Arabit and virtual unknowns Arvin Garcia, Theodore Hawkins Jr., Lyndon Lagat and Kim Joseph Valenzuela.

The Shell Turbochargers have secured the top pick while the Purefoods TJ Hotdogs and the FedEx Express will select second and third overall, respectively.



PINGRIS, mobile at 6-foot-6, will be highly coveted in the PBA draft.

MCC Non-Master starts today

THE MCC Non-Master chess tournament reels off at 9 a.m. today at the fourth floor of J&F Divino Bldg., at #967 Aurora Blvd. beside St. Joseph Church and near LRT 2 Anonas Station in Quirino District, Quezon City.

The two-day event is open to all amateurs, unrated and rated players, regardless of age and sex.

It will employ the seven-round Swiss System and time control of 60 minutes per player in selecting the top five finishers who will receive the following cash prizes: champion—P5,000; second—P2,500; third—P1,500; fourth—P1,000 and fifth—P700.

Interested parties are advised to register at the venue before the tournament starts. For details, call MCC at 826-8560 and 0916-8521069.

Datu posts 5th straight chess win

Standings after round 5:
5.0 points—IM Idelfonso Datu
4.5—Belsar Valencia
4.0—FM Adrian Ros Pacis, WFM Sheerie Joy Lomibao, Rex Ami, John John Mendoza, Romeo Terre, Fidel Labuanan

BAGUIO CITY—Top seed International Master Idelfonso Datu beat 5th seed National Master Samuel Estimo in the top board encounter to remain undefeated after the fifth round yesterday of the 62-man field Baguio Active Chess Competition here at the University of Baguio.

Handling black, Datu beat Estimo, secretary general of the National Chess Federation of the Philippines, after 53 moves of Alekhine Defense to raise his total to 5 points.

Earlier, Datu, an enlisted man of the Philippine Army, beat 30th seed John Carino, 18th seed Manuel Alvez, 9th seed Rex Ami and 7th seed John John Mendoza of Baguio City, respectively.

Belsar Valencia shared the limelight by disposing 13th seed Noel Garcia in 54 moves of Kings Indian Duel to score 4.5 points and grab solo second place.

Datu and Valencia are playing in the sixth round at presstime.

The champion in this two-day event organized by the Baguio Active Chess led by engineer Alfondo Rulloda will receive P5,000.

Other fifth round results saw 2nd seed Fide Master Adrian Ros Pacis nip Ronaldo Alvez in 60 moves of a Sicilian Defense-Dragon Variation, 7th seed John John Mendoza outwit Manuel Alvez after 35 moves of a Queens Gambit Declined, 9th seed Rex Ami trounce Gonzalo Fernandez in 29 moves of a Kings Indian Defense, 14th seed Romeo Terre whip Danilo de Luna in 42 moves of Birds Opening and 46th seed Fidel Labuanan upset 15th seed Noel Pinic in 37 moves of Pirc Defense.

Woman Fide Master Sheerie Joy Lomibao, seeded 17th, thwarted 20th seed Francis Sagyaman in 27 moves of a Ruy Lopez to join Pacis, Mendoza, Terre and Labuanan at 4 points.

NM Marlon Bernardino, Contributor

PSA awardees boost RP bid versus Japanese jungolfers

LOCAL jungolf stars Jayvie Agojo, Dottie Ardina, Miguel Tabuena and AR Ramos, who will be honored by the PSA for their international exploits in 2003, will banner a star-studded Philippine contingent in a dual meet with Japan at the Tagaytay Midlands Golf Club on Jan. 5-6, 2004.

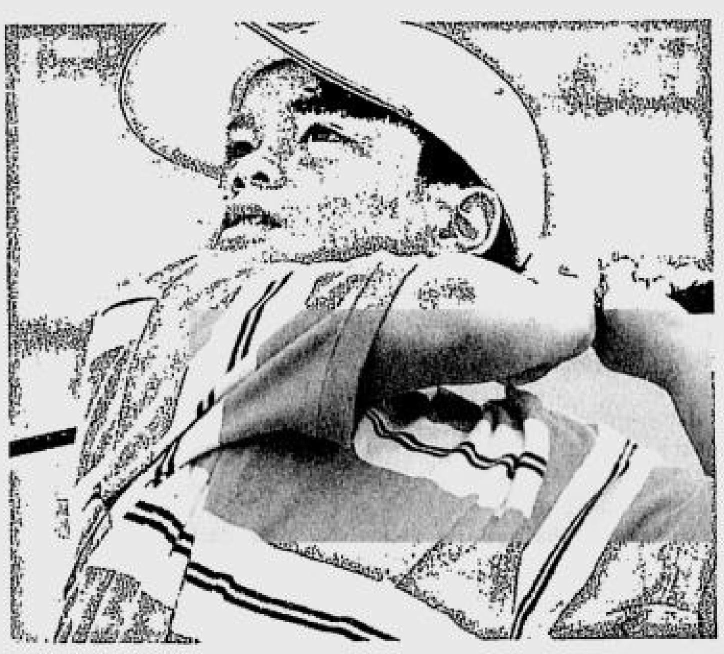
Dubbed the inaugural Philippines-Japan Junior Golf Friendship tournament, the tourney will also feature a team of jungolfers from Fukuoka in the 36-hole event designed to promote regional unity through sports.

Tagaytay Midlands is throwing its full support by providing free use of the course and accommodations. Comworks and Milkjoy are co-sponsors.

The Japanese will be under the care of the Philippine-Japan Camaraderie Association Inc. headed by Ichiro Osawa and Kazuo Fujitsuka, chair of the Kotonami Jungolf Committee.

Entries from Japan and the Philippines will be fighting it out for division honors in Class A, Class B and Class C. A special event featuring top-ranked jungolfers in various divisions has been added to spice up the hostilities. It will be a home-and-away showdown with a local delegation set to fly to Fukuoka this coming April.

The RP-Japan Friendship tourney is the final leg of the holiday break series of the Samsung Jungolf Tour that had brought the jungolfers to Southwoods for the Young Guns event, Riviera for the Nike Christmas Classic and the Alabang Invitational.



TABUENA: Young gun

FILE PHOTO

Nanoy Ilusorio Cup blasts off

BAGUIO CITY—Accuracy, patience in attacking the greens and course management will be the key factors for participants in their quest for honors in the 4th Nanoy Ilusorio Golf Cup which fires off today at the short but tricky par 61 Baguio Country Club (BCC) golf course.

This one-day golf tournament is in honor of the late (Nanoy) Ilusorio, BCC president emeritus and chairman for life.

"The tournament was conceived to give impetus on the life and works of Nanoy—a sportsman, a leader and a visionary, whose heart and ideals have touched the lives of countless people," said Jose Agcaoili.

Anthony de Leon, BCC general manager said: "The tournament is a tribute to Nanoy. He is our No. 1 supporter, not only in golf but almost all field of sports and also in the field of commerce."

Some 200 players, mostly members of BCC and their guests, are seeing action in this event supported by Smart Philippines Inc. and WH Consultants Inc.

Eala needs to prove himself in 2004

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

MOST fans will remember the Philippine Basketball Association more for its failures than for its successes in 2003.

I am not saying that Noli Eala was ineffective as the PBA commissioner in the season just finished, but many said his management style was all *pa-pogi*, *pa*-cute, leading to a most chaotic year in the history of the PBA, once widely regarded as the country's most profitable and premier professional basketball organization.

While the competition among the teams never stops—the teams are already busy getting new players and coaches and getting ready for the transition Fiesta Conference in February next year—still the league did not make any headway when this season was done and dusted. Why? Could it be because the PBA has a leadership without direction? Has it lost its mass appeal then?

The usual banner crowd was missing from the recent season-ending Reinforced Conference, while earlier this year, the All Filipino Cup, which was supposed to be interesting, failed to attract the fans and was a box-office flop. The foreign-flavored Invitationals was an even bigger disaster at the gates. Because of this, Eala said the PBA would make sure that the foreign teams that will come here next year are better and tougher and will give the locals a run for their money unlike the "patsies" that played during that ill-fated Invitationals.

Many wouldn't want to be in the shoes of Commissioner Eala right now because of the many bad things that had happened since he replaced Jun Bernardino early this year. They blamed Eala for losing control of the whole situation, saying the PBA is facing not only dwindling crowd attendance, but also many other problems such as the loss of television and radio revenues and ratings, the ticklish drug scandal, the unequal treatment and discrimination of erring players in the league, the mounting complaints against biased officiating, the lack of a permanent venue, and the unpleasant reports linking league insiders to the importation of several Fil-foreign players with dubious documents.

On the ill-fated TV coverage, the NBN 4-IBC 13 consortium finished the season deep in debt, with the government-run NBN 4 owing the PBA some P134 million of the network's P200-million total obligation. IBC 13, on the other hand, incurred penalties amounting to P60 million for its failure to telecast 20 PBA games, including the whole best-of-seven series of the Reinforced Conference. (ABC 5 was reported to be the new carrying station of the PBA games beginning next year).

On the ticklish issue of drug abuse in 2003, it was the view of many, including Sen. Robert Jaworski, that the human rights of the players concerned were violated chiefly because they were not given due process before their names and respective suspensions were announced to the public after the initial findings.

"I don't want to say that PBA Commissioner Noli Eala or the PBA itself is at fault," Jaworski once said in an interview, "but the fact that the players didn't have much time to react before the information was revealed to the public placed the burden of proof on the players, who would otherwise dispute the findings." The 56-year-old former basketball star added a Senate hearing revealed that there were indeed flaws in the implementation of the PBA drug-testing program which was the basis for imposing penalties on several top-caliber players like Jun Limpot of Barangay Ginebra, Noli Locsin of Talk 'N Text and Davonn Harp of Batang Red Bull.

And speaking of the Senate, Sen. Robert Barbers, chair of the Senate committee on games, amusement and sports, also said five Fil-American players who claimed to have Filipino roots did not tell the truth. The committee said Asi Taulava, recently named the league's Most Valuable Player, John Ordonio, Ali Peek, Dorian Peña and Rudy Hatfield had presented dubious papers in claiming they were half-Filipino. Barbers said his committee conducted an investigation and visited the place of birth of people that these Fil-Am players claimed to be their relatives, but failed to find the birth, baptismal and even the death certificates of their supposed relatives.

On the imposition of fines and penalties on erring players, Eala must show fairness and compassion to the poor and downtrodden; to show to the public that there is equal treatment and no discrimination in the PBA. Eala should heed the appeal of Red Bull head coach Yeng Guiao to lower the eight-month suspension and the P70,000 fine slapped on his point guard, Jimwell Torion, for committing a hard foul on TNT's Jimmy Alapag. "It's grossly unfair and too harsh." (To be continued)

***

BETTER LATE THAN NEVER. I extend my warmest holiday greetings and gratitude to the tireless Paul R. Mortel of MBLA Court, Marikina City, for sending me copies of his very informative "Sari-Saring Trivia." Sorry for not being able to respond to you immediately, my friend.

PETRON Treats invites you to DISNEY ON ICE
PRODUCED BY FELD ENTERTAINMENT
DISNEY'S Beauty and the BEAST
Performs on December 23 to January 4, 2004
Get 15% off on Disney on Ice tickets for every P 300 purchase at Petron Treats! See print ad for details.
Per DTI NCR Permit No. 3887 series of 2003.

Igorot is world-class karateka

CHEES: 1993 world champion EV ESPIRITU

By Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—Julian Chees, a Bontoc Kankaney from the Mt. Province, habitually wears patched-up jeans to town. He is usually good-natured enough to perform difficult karate katas (series of combat exercise stances) for sports enthusiasts, despite having downed 10 bottles of beer a few minutes before his spontaneous exhibitions.

So when he finally returned to Baguio this week after a 20-year absence, nearly everyone was surprised to find him just the way he was when he left the Philippines in 1983 for Germany.

To most of the karate community in the world, Chees is a world-class karate champion. But this 43-year-old geodetic engineering graduate had been representing Germany when he won this crown.

German newspapers cheered "Kleine Philipino" (the small Filipino) when the 5-foot-3 Chees beat 6-foot tall contenders from the United States, Japan and Europe during the 1993 Shotoken Karate World Championship.

Since then, "Kleine Philipino" has been a German tabloid staple for his successes in Las Vegas, Japan and most major karate competitions between 1993 and 2001.

"They were amazed that, as the only (diminutive) Asian in German karate competitions, I was getting better points off the blows from top karate bets like Paul Kee, the Swedish champion. All zeitung (newspapers) began calling me Kleine Philipino and that nickname became my label," he said.

What Chees enjoyed most about his steady climb through the karate world was the fact that he was also "the oldest known competitor."

"In this sport, a 30-year-old is usually considered 'lolo' (grandfather), but there I was, 'Lolo Chees' ducking it out with 20 year olds. Many of them tried to convince me to step down because they were worried about breaking me," he said.

"But I told them that when we fight on the floor, if a competitor is 20 years old, then I am also 20 years old. I told him I could have the mindset of men younger than me, because I am built to take that much punishment."

"Kleine Philipino" did retire from major karate competitions in 2001. He accepted a coaching job for the South Germany Karate Association in Wurzburg, south of Frankfurt.

He has been teaching a raw version of traditional karate, which subscribes to "real fighting techniques" without dissolving the budo (spirit) of shotoken karate.

Chees brought this new style home last Friday when he conducted a seminar for fellow JKA members. "I was disappointed to discover that karate is barely supported here, when we have enough talents to win for the Philippines eight times the gold they covet from the sports like basketball and football," he said.

With four of his German pupils, Chees introduced both karate cultures to the spirit of JKA, which was developed in the 1960s by Japanese master Kunio Sasaki.

Germany's success, he said, owed much to this humble club whose adherence to traditional karate had made it a pariah to contemporary karate associations.

Sasaki regrouped all of the JKA chapters, and with Baguio master Edgar Kapawen Sr., produced a reunion tournament at the University of Baguio last week for Chees.

But Chees told them that he was always baffled by how his karate career had grown.

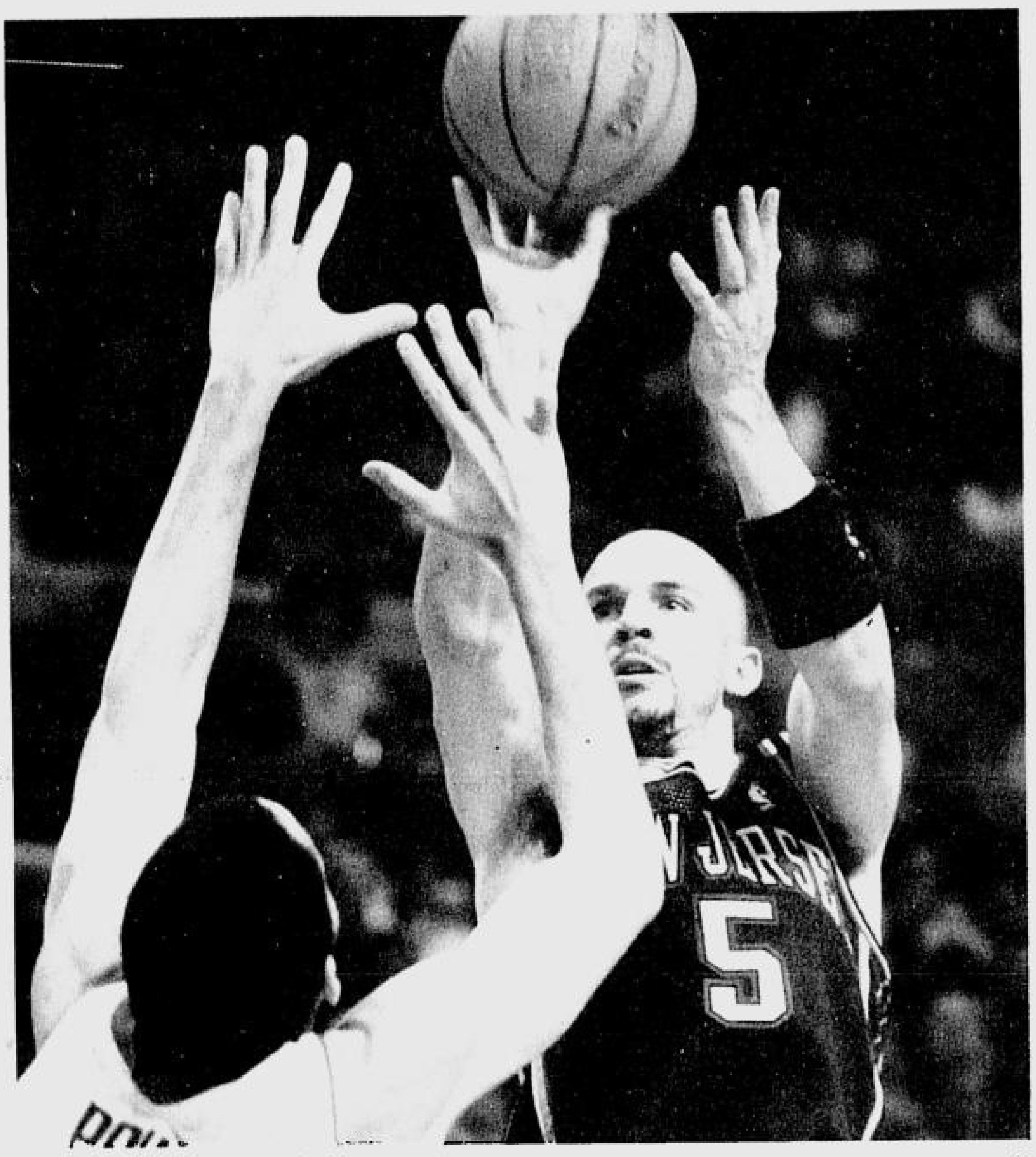
He was born in Bontoc, Mt. Province, completely enamored with the military culture. "I like discipline. I believe that discipline is the most important aspect of any individual. I trained with the ROTC, and took advanced ROTC courses even when I was studying geodetic engineering at the Baguio Colleges Foundation," Chees said.

He was a martial arts artist at age 6 under the sturdy gaze of martial law. Ferdinand Marcos' New Society deference to national discipline rubbed off on the young Chees, who remembered most the salute he gave Marcos during a 1982 ROTC parade at Camp Crame than the political quagmire martial law eventually created before 1986.

The martial arts principle ruled his life, Chees said. When he was scheduled to undergo board examinations for a geodetic engineering license, he opted for a final chance to win his black belt. Skipping the exams, he proceeded to the Japan Karate Association (JKA) headquarters in Manila.

Curiously, it was romance which brought Chees to Germany, not his black belt or his potential engineering license.

"I met my wife Wally in Bontoc and we decided to reside in her country. We have three kids, all of whom are trained in karate, but who have not followed it with the same passion that I have. I couldn't really force them," the karate champion said.



KIDD: 56 NBA career triple-double AP

Kidd lifts Nets; Pistons prevail

INDIANAPOLIS—Jason Kidd had his second triple-double in as many nights as the New Jersey Nets continued their good run with an 82-75 win over the Indiana Pacers in NBA action on Saturday.

Kidd had 16 points, 14 assists and 10 rebounds as he picked up his league-leading sixth triple-double of the season for the Nets, winners of nine of their past 11 games.

It was also the 56th triple-double of his NBA career.

On Friday night against Detroit, Kidd registered 24 points, 12 assists and 11 rebounds.

Indiana trailed badly for most of the night before a late fourth quarter rally brought them within two points but the Nets held on to hand the Pacers their second straight loss.

Kenyon Martin scored 23 points and pulled in 13 rebounds and Richard Jefferson added 20 points to give the Nets their third straight win and ninth victory in 11 games.

Al Harrington had 22 points while Jermaine O'Neal and Austin Croshere each contributed 13 points and 11 rebounds for Indiana.

Indiana coach Rick Carlisle was ejected in the second half for arguing with officials.

Carlisle had a dispute with Pacers Ron Artest in the first half prompting him to bench the forward for the second half.

In Atlanta, Richard Hamilton scored 28 points to help the Detroit Pistons rally to an 87-84 win over the Hawks.

Chauncey Billups added 19 points and Bob Sura put in 13, giving the Pistons their first win in three games.

Shareef Abdur-Rahim had 20 points and 12 rebounds and Jason Terry chipped in 20 points for the Hawks, who outscored Detroit, 22-9, in the third quarter but lost for the ninth time in 10 games.

In Miami, Keith Van Horn poured in 28 points to give the New York Knicks an easy 100-80 win over the Heat.

Allan Houston scored 15 points and Frank Williams added 14 to give the Knicks their third win in the past four games.

Lamar Odom scored a team-high 25 points for the Heat, who lost for the first time in four games.

In Chicago, Jamal Crawford nailed a season-high 42 points to help the Bulls coast by the Washington Wizards, 100-86.

Corie Blount scored 12 points and Antonio Davis added 11 to give the Bulls their second straight win after four consecutive losses.

In Dallas, Dirk Nowitzki scored 18 points and pulled in 17 rebounds to power the Mavericks to a 104-98 win over the Memphis Grizzlies.

Michael Finley had a team-high 24 points and Antoine Walker added 13 points and 10 rebounds to help the Mavs to their second win in a row. *Reuters*

Complete results:

Detroit 87, Atlanta 84; New York 100, Miami 80; New Jersey 82, Indiana 75; Chicago 100, Washington 86; Dallas 104, Memphis 98; Minnesota 104, Seattle 86.

Escude, Golovin given wildcard entries

MELBOURNE—France's former Davis Cup hero Nicolas Escude and 15-year-old Tatiana Golovin have been given wildcard entries to next year's Australian Open, the tournament announced on Sunday.

The Australian Open, from Jan. 19 to Feb. 1, holds a reciprocal wildcard agreement with the French Open and the two national federations.

Escude, 27, the hero of France's 2001 Davis Cup final win over Australia at Melbourne Park, watched his ranking slip from 34 to 114 during an injury-interrupted 2003.

"Boasting a junior ranking as high as world number six in September this year, Golovin was a semifinalist at the US Open juniors in 2002, and in 2003 reached the last eight at both Flushing Meadows and Junior Wimbledon," the Australian Open said in a statement.

The talented Frenchwoman has played one senior grand slam tournament, losing in the first round at this year's French Open, the Australian Open statement said.

"She has a senior ranking of world number 355," it said. *Reuters*

Do you like Jose Miguel Arroyo?

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

IT'S easy to like our First Gentleman, Jose Miguel Arroyo.

Mr. Arroyo oozes with inborn charm, lovely pounds of baby fat and there are people, like PSC chair Eric Buhain, who would bend and go out of their way to demonstrate their affection for the President's husband.

Of course, despite his well-publicized kindness, topped by an unusual concern for Filipino athletes, Mr. Arroyo is not lacking in enemies.

There are those who find it quite easy to dislike the First Gentleman, among them Sen. Ping Lacson, who had labeled Mr. Arroyo The Incredible Hulk.

Are those who like Mr. Arroyo more numerous than people who hate his guts?

That would not be easy to determine.

What's clear is that there are those who would go to the length of practically licking his shoes in a bid to save their hide.

There is this belief that, if you win the admiration of the First Gentleman, then favor from Her Excellency, the President, could not be far behind.

***

It's easy to like Jose Miguel Arroyo.

But there are also those who would go out of their way to find fault in what the First Gentleman does.

This reporter, undoubtedly, has just been ranked among the Mike Arroyo haters.

Reason, of course, was the sports section banner story Saturday on the postdated checks supposedly issued as incentive to all the medal winners in the Vietnam Southeast Asian Games.

Did I go out of my way to hit the First Gentleman, who got enormous media mileage with the incentives given to the RP medal winners in Vietnam?

I can honestly say that the story, later labeled as anomalous by people who truly love the First Gentleman, was written candidly.

Let me also explain that, deep in my heart, I don't hate Jose Miguel Arroyo.

***

For the record, that story on the incentives promised in time for Christmas came as a result of several phoned-in complaints.

It was just too bad that I had been made to believe the incentive checks were postdated.

I sincerely apologize.

It was an error because the government, I was made to realize later, cannot issue postdated checks.

Anyway, for the record, these incentive checks were dated Dec. 22, 2003.

But a representative of the complainants told me that the checks were released only after the close of banking hours the following day, Dec. 23.

Because Dec. 24 was a holiday, it's only today that these checks could be encashed.

Putting one and one together, some of the recipients of the incentive checks, dated Dec. 22 but which could be honored only today, also had reason to complain.

Let me however stress that the inability of the incentive recipients to readily encash the checks should not detract from the kindness of the First Gentleman.

Somebody else faulted and failed to find sufficient funding for these checks.

***

Do I like Jose Miguel Arroyo?

How do I know?

All I can say is that Mr. Arroyo's perpetual availability could at times be both a credit and discredit to the Presidency.

This big fellow who had also been suspected of being Jose Pidal is almost everywhere.

Then, all of a sudden, he's nowhere to be seen.

As a result, his name is often dragged into many transactions, both clean and dirty.

He's also often suspected of openly campaigning this early for the re-election of his lovely wife, the President of the Republic.

His countless defenders, however, are always there to tick off his good qualities.

Mike Arroyo may not be aware of this.

But the First Gentleman, through the PSC, must be told he had helped many athletes save up for the remaining days of merrymaking.

How? Well, they did not get hold of their cash rewards in time for Christmas.

But if the RP medal winners in the Vietnam Games had, say, gotten their money ahead, they would have had nothing left for the rest of the holidays.

This should be another feather in the First Gentleman's cap?

HOCKEY ACTION
Todd Harvey (left) of the San Jose Sharks is congratulated by teammate Mike Ricci after scoring a goal against the Los Angeles Kings during their ice hockey game Saturday at Staples Center in Los Angeles, California. The game ended in a 4-4 tie. AFP

OPEN CLASSIC RACE

Red Star Rising frustrates 'WB' again

By Edwin Villanueva

WEST Bound lived up to his tag as the "Heartbreak Horse of the Year 2003" as Red Star Rising foiled him again, this time in the Philracom Open Classic yesterday at the San Lazaro Leisure Park.

As in the recent Presidential Gold Cup, Red Star Rising engaged West Bound in a searing stretch duel and came up with the bigger strides down the wire.

At the end of the 2,000-meter contest, the photo showed Red Star Rising winning by a scanty nose and relegating West Bound to second place anew.

"*Salamat kay Lord at nakaulit* (Thank God we made it again)," said veteran rider Manolito Daquis, who employed the very same wait-and-see tactic that lifted Red Star Rising to a narrow victory in the PGC two weeks ago at the same track. "*Nag-abang abang lang ako ulit at tinutukan lang si* West Bound (I just kept an eye on West Bound)."

RED Star Rising (l) repeats over West Bound. JESS YUSON

The win was worth P1 million for former racing commissioner Francis Trillana and his son, Philtobo director Michael Trillana. The Trillana Stable previously bagged a record P2 million in the 31st PGC.

"Michael and I are very happy Red Star Rising won again. We're thankful for getting a chance to compete with a great horse that is West Bound," said Francis Trillana.

Red Star Rising, a three-year-old chestnut colt sired by Khozaam out of Ito's Choice, charged from the middle of the pack and ranged right up on the Jonathan Hernandez-ridden West Bound as they bounded the final bend.

Daquis wisely drove his mount to West Bound's right, knowing fully well that maneuvering Red Star Rising along the rail would cost them the race.

The move proved decisive again as the gutsy galloper, conditioned by Ruben Clor, responded briskly to Daquis' zippy hand-riding to capture the year's last major race.

"*Gusto ni* Unoh (Hernandez) *sa balya ko ipasok si* Red Star Rising *pero di ko ginawa. Sa labas uli kami kasi alam ko ayaw matapalan niyan si* West Bound (Hernandez wants me to put Red Star Rising along the rail but I didn't. I know West Bound doesn't run well when tackled by another horse)," added Daquis, one of the first three graduates of the Philippine Jockeys Academy.

West Bound, denied a sweep by Success Story in the Triple Crown and also shamed by Material Maker and Security Master in his recent outings, settled for P376,750.

Import Buena Sera arrived third, six lengths off the second placer, and got P209,250, while Diktador finished fourth for P84,000.

Free Wind came in fifth followed by Catwalk Pia, Dandansoy, Real Slew and Royal Catch, who carried the march up to the far turn.

Red Star Rising, bred by Jose "Bebo" Quiros, was sent away as the far second favorite with sales of P251,337 in the doubles out of P1,505,627, while West Bound attracted P839,568 as the top choice.

Winning time was 2:07 flat (25-24-26.5-25-5-26).

Patriots gain home advantage

Brady shines, equals career-high TDs

BRADY: It was a good day to do it. AP

FOXBORO, Mass.—New England Patriots locked up home-field advantage throughout the playoffs with a lopsided 31-0 win over the Buffalo Bills on Saturday.

The victory was the Patriots' franchise record 12th straight, making them an NFL-best 14-2 for the season.

It was payback time for quarterback Tom Brady after the Patriots were thumped 31-0 by the Bills (6-10) in week one, Buffalo capitalizing on four Brady turnovers during that game.

Brady was nearly flawless in the rematch, throwing for touchdowns on New England's first two possessions, finishing with a total of four for the day to equal a career high.

Remarkably, he had thrown for just three scores at Gillette Stadium in seven previous games this campaign.

"It was a good day to do it," Brady said of his four-TD effort.

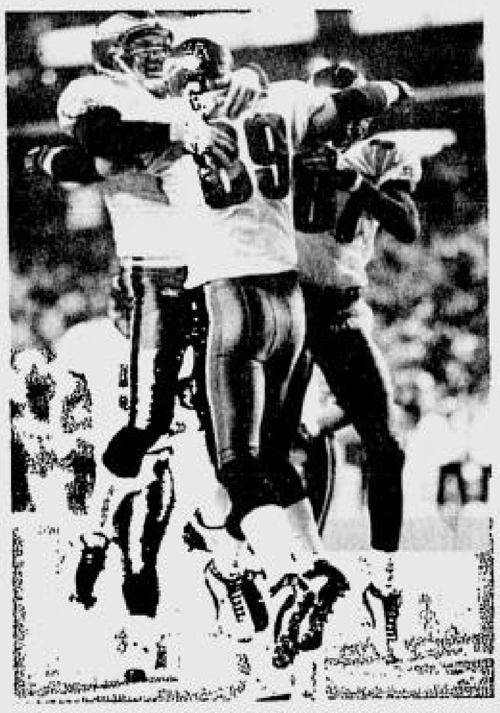
He found Daniel Graham from a yard just over four minutes into the game to open the scoring, then hooked up with Bethel Johnson from nine yards for a second TD 5 1/2 minutes later.

He passed 19 yards to Troy Brown very early in the second quarter for New England's third TD, shaking off a vicious hit from the previous play.

Shortly after, he took a shot to the lower left leg from former teammate and still best friend Lawyer Milloy, causing the leg to bend awkwardly.

He limped off the field, but returned on the next series to lead another scoring drive, this time finding David Givens from 10 yards.

It was a forgettable afternoon for Bills quarterback Drew Bledsoe, who spent nine seasons in New England.



CHAD Lewis (89) of the Philadelphia Eagles celebrates his first quarter touchdown reception with teammates Freddie Mitchell (84) and Todd Pinkston. AFP

In San Francisco, the Seattle Seahawks (10-6) roared back from an early 14-0 deficit to down the 49ers (7-9) 24-17 and stay alive for a post-season berth.

The Seahawks, who won for just the second time on the road this season, will still need some help on Sunday if they are going to make their first playoff appearance since 1999.

In Landover, Maryland, the Philadelphia Eagles (12-4) sewed up their third straight NFC East title with a convincing 31-7 win over the underachieving Washington Redskins (5-11).

Philadelphia can claim home field throughout the playoffs if the St Louis Rams (12-3) come up short in Detroit on Sunday. *Reuters*

Noche Buena derby finals fire off today

MORE than 80 fights are lined up in Roligon Mega Cockpit's "Noche Buena 5-Cock Derby" championship round which starts at 5 p.m. today.

Leading the favorites are 12 cockers who tallied two victories each in the eliminations last Saturday.

They are Bobbit del Rosario and Arthur Mangulabnan of Bulacan (Baccarat King), Japanese cocker Ogawa Hagime (Tom at and Omari), Rey Briones of Masbate (Spartan Blood), Erwin Maligaya (Win Rose), Maj. Bobby Doromal (Eskrimador Jan. 6), Gary Santos (NVK), Allan Hernandez (Cadena de Amor), Boy Villegas (Pancho), Dr. Baquer (SM Archangel), Erwin Diamante (Springfield) and Gerry Perez (Marvin's Angel).

Meanwhile, the first derby for 2004 is set on Jan. 6 via the "Eskrimador and Super Gringo 4-Cock Derby" to be hosted by former Cainta Coliseum operators Bobby Doromal, Roming Vergara and Greg Eligado.

For an entry fee of P10,000, the cash prize at stake is P300,000.

Also slated are the following derbies: "Nagkarlan AUT 4-Cock Derby" on Jan. 8 (Dr. Tuazon); Tagapo Okidok 4-Cock Derby on Jan. 13 (lawyer Joey Mendoza and Dr. Jovy) and Classical 4-Cock Derby on Jan. 15 (Pol Garde).

Las Piñas tilt slated Jan. 3

LAS Piñas Cockpit's "Grand Opening 4-Cock Derby" gets under way this coming Saturday, Jan. 3, with more than 50 cockers and breeders expected to take part.

To be hosted by Mayor Nene Aguilar, the one-day event will be Las Piñas Cockpit's opening salvo for the 2004 cockfighting season.

At stake is P500,000 and two refrigerators for the champions while entry fee is P11,000.

Submission of weights is on derby day, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. only. Inquiries may be coursed through 873-1040.

Meanwhile, pit manager Alex Tobias announced that LPC's new hackfight schedule is from Monday to Sunday to accommodate the huge number of participants comprised mostly of small-time cockers and backyard breeders.

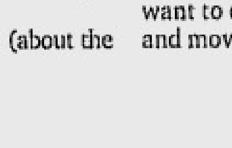
Tobias is also hosting a 3-cock derby on Jan. 14 with no less than 35 entries seeing action.

Former major league player shot to death

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico—Former major league baseball player Ivan Calderon has been shot to death. He was 41.

Witnesses said Calderon was in a store Saturday when two people entered and, without a word, shot the former outfielder multiple times in the back, said police Sgt. Maribel Arzuaga. *AP*

Football loser in Ferdinand drugs case, says executive



FERDINAND

LONDON—One positive to come out of the Rio Ferdinand drugs case was that no player would miss taking a dope test again, Football Association (FA) chief executive Mark Palios said on Sunday.

"After this case, I don't think any club will allow a player to miss a drugs test again," Palios told the News of the World newspaper in an interview.

England international Ferdinand was given an eight-month ban by an independent disciplinary commission earlier this month for missing a drugs test.

The Manchester United defender had been charged by the Football Association (FA) with a "failure or refusal" to take the test at United's training ground at Carrington on Sept. 23.

"I didn't feel pleased or vindicated (about the decision). I actually felt quite sad because I know, up until now, football has been the loser," Palios said.

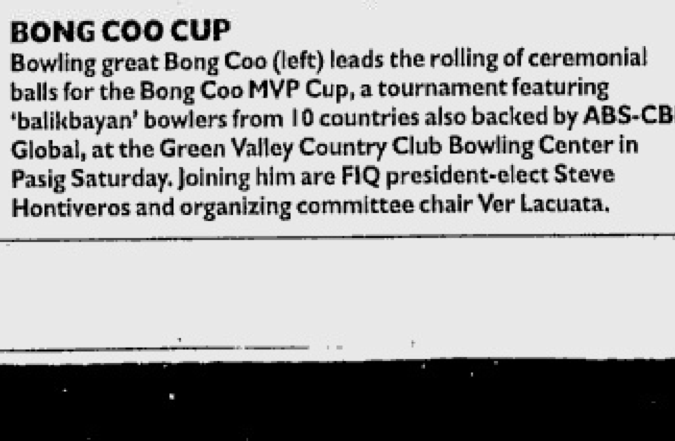
"But if there has been a positive in what has been a difficult year it is that we are at last on the right road." Ferdinand passed the test 36 hours after he should have taken the original one.

The FA, which was widely criticised for its handling of the affair, ruled him out of England's final Euro 2004 qualifier in Turkey on Oct. 11.

Ferdinand's exclusion from the game in Istanbul prompted threats of an unprecedented strike by his England teammates.

England drew the match 0-0 to qualify for the tournament finals.

"I've got this reputation as a hardliner ... but it's not true. This is about consensus—I want to draw a line under the Ferdinand case and move on," Palios said. *Reuters*

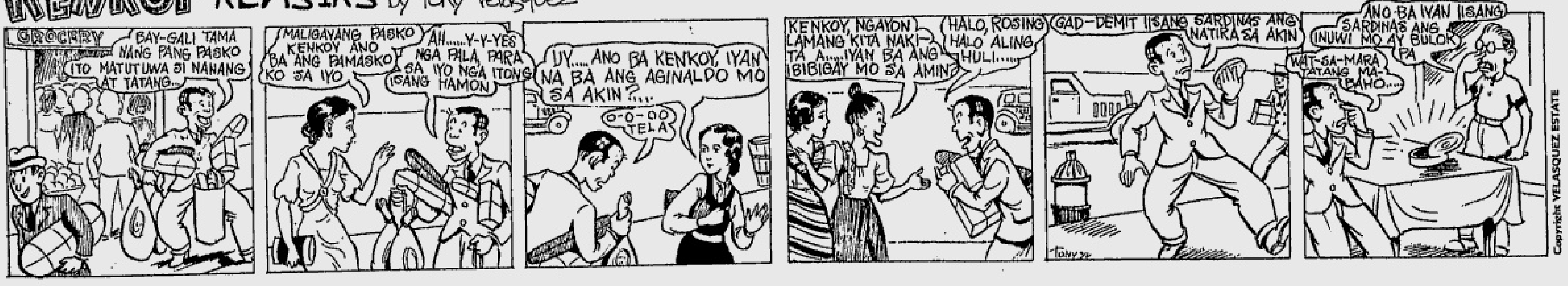


BONG COO CUP

Bowling great Bong Coo (left) leads the rolling of ceremonial balls for the Bong Coo MVP Cup, a tournament featuring 'balikbayan' bowlers from 10 countries also backed by ABS-CBN Global, at the Green Valley Country Club Bowling Center in Pasig Saturday. Joining him are FIQ president-elect Steve Hontiveros and organizing committee chair Ver Lacuata.

KENKOY KLASIKS by Tony Velasquez

LIWAYWAY 12.23.32 from the LOPEZ MUSEUM collection / Courtesy of KOMIKS CAFE / INQ EDITION 12.22.03


GROCERY
BAY-GALI TAMA NANG PANG PASKO ITO MATUTUWA SI NANANG AT TATANG...
MALIGAYANG PASKO KENKOY ANO BA ANG PAMASKO KO SA IYO
AH.....Y-Y-YES NGA PALA, PARA SA IYO NGA ITONG ISANG HAMON
UY.... ANO BA KENKOY, IYAN NA BA ANG AGINALDO MO SA AKIN?...
O-O-OO TELA
KENKOY, NGAYON LAMANG KITA NAKITA A....IYAN BA ANG IBIBIGAY MO SA AMIN?
HALO, ROSING HALO ALING HULI.....
GAD-DEMIT IISANG SARDINAS ANG NATIRA SA AKIN
ANO BA IYAN IISANG SARDINAS ANG INUWI MO AY BULOK PA
WAT-SA-MARA TATANG MA-BAHO...
TONY 32
Copyright VELASQUEZ ESTATE

Kids should be kids

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

LAST Dec. 20, Channel 2's "Magandang Tanghali, Bayan" held the monthly finals of its "Duet Bulilit" singing contest for children. The three young pairs sang well enough, but what made the competition less impressive was the contender's choice of love songs for their contest pieces.

The kids, or more likely their parents, were ill-advised to opt for romantic tunes, because they didn't jibe with the contestants' being children.

This was aggravated by the way the kids were made to look and dress. All three pairs were in formal grownup togs, and two of the three girls had full make-up on that looked garish and was much too mature for their tender years.

The people behind the show should have disallowed such inappropriate adult gambits, because they contradicted the *"bulilit"* aspect of the contest's title.

What is it about us as a people that makes us think children are cute and cool when they try to look like pint-sized adults? We owe it to our kids to give them time to be the children they are, and to not goad them into teenage or young-adult behavior long before their time.

There are many good songs out there that are more properly suited to child performers, and kids can be showbiz-y without having to look like miniature grown-ups. And heavy make-up, strong lipstick and rouge for children are big no-no's!

Kids should be kids—and that's the bottom line.

Party for homeless kids

BIBSY Carballo's Snack Arts, in partnership with "Chikiting Patrol," ERMs and SM Supermalls, is throwing a gift-giving party, "Bata, Bata, May Kaibigan Ka Pa Ba?" for disadvantaged and homeless children. The party will be held from 2 to 5 p.m. on Jan. 16 at SM North Edsa, and the event will be aired on "Chikiting Patrol" at 6:30 p.m. on Jan. 24 (over ABC-5).

The party will be graced by Snack artists and friends led by **Boots Anson-Roa**, **Jackielou Blanco**, **Sharmaine Arnaiz**, **Anna Fegi**, **Alma Concepcion**, **Christine Jacob**, **Ricky Davao**, **Isabel Rivas**, **Ces Quesada**, **Bayang Barrios**, **Champagne Morales**, **Jenine Desiderio**, **Chiqui Puno**, **Bodjie Parena**, **Adriana Agcaoli**, **Fanny Serrano**, **Stella Cañete**, the acoustic duo of **Flexi Santos** and **Pol Soto**, **Timmy Cruz**, and new artists **Shereen Cadera**, **Angel Maganto** and **Richard Signey**.

Scheduled are performances by Snack artists, gift-giving and parlor games with "Chikiting Patrol" hosts **Chelsea Wingkee**, **Shinette Wingkee**, **Emem Borja**, **Krystal Galiza**, **Mariel Gonzales**, **Ronald Diaz** and **Ruth Diaz**.

"Bata, Bata" is produced by Carballo, **Nadeiz Sante** of "Chikiting Patrol" and events organizer **Ericson Revilla** of ERMS.

New Year concert

THE PHILIPPINE Philharmonic Orchestra welcomes the New Year on Jan. 9 with "Concert for Two Pianos," featuring **Raul Sunico** and **Christine Coyiuto** performing Poulenc's "Concerto for Two Pianos in D Minor."

French conductor **Dominique Fanal** will lead the PPO. He has conducted the Sinfonietta de Paris since 1982, and has led many orchestras around the world, performing each year in London (St. Martin in the Fields), Brussels (Conservatoire Royal), Mexico (Hellenic Cultural Center), Montevideo, Buenos Aires and Cairo.

For the New Year concert, the PPO will also play N. Berlioz's "Beatrice et Benedict Overture" Gounod's "Faust Ballet Music" and Milhaud's "Le Boeuf sur le Toit."

The concert is a presentation of the CCP in cooperation with the French Embassy in Manila.

Meralco Theater shows

KEITH Martin, the singer of "Because of You," will perform with **Jimmy Bondoc**, **Paolo Santos**, the Passage Band and Silk at the Meralco Theater on Jan. 8, 9 and 10.

On Jan. 8, special performers include **Medwin Marfil**, **Rebekah**, Pido with Take One, Akafellas, **Kitchie Nadal**, **Sarah Geronimo** and the Manila Philharmonic Orchestra. Call 891-5610.

The obscure film that trounced a masterpiece

By Constantino C. Tejero

REVIEW

SOME critics consider Pedro Almodóvar's "Hable con Ella" (Talk to Her) one of the masterpieces of his late maturity, if not the apex of his film career.

So, when it was toppled down by a relatively obscure film for the Best Picture at the Goya Awards (Spanish equivalent to the Oscars), and was overrun by it for Spain's submission to the Oscars for the Best Foreign-Language Film, not a few cineastes registered dismay.

For months they kept wondering what was this spoilsport that could so trounce an acknowledged masterpiece of a revered filmmaker. Last month, Instituto Cervantes satisfied their curiosity.

"Los Lunes al Sol" (Mondays in the Sun), by Fernando León de Aranoa, was screened to a packed audience in Salón de Actos of the Spanish cultural center in Manila.

This film won five Goya awards, including Best Picture, Best Director, Best Actor (for Javier Bardem). Submitted to the Oscars, however, it didn't make it to the list of those nominated for the Best Foreign-Language Film, which category had a record-breaking number of 54 films from all over the world vying for five slots.

(Meanwhile, Almodóvar's film was entered in the main category for the Best Picture, a popularity contest where it had a slim chance of winning. It won for Best Screenplay, though.)

Huge irony

Aranoa's film tells the story of a group of five newly retrenched dockyard workers in Vigo. It traces each character's arcs and trajectories as they drift through life from morning to evening, dusk till dawn, day after day.

The ogre of unemployment, rampant over the new European Community, is dragging down these men as they struggle to hold their heads up. They are forced to spend even what's supposedly the first and busiest working day of the week as a day in the sun—that is, a perpetual vacation.

Lino is the only one who continues to apply for jobs against the odds and despite ridicule and humiliation. Amador, the oldest in the group, has fallen into alcoholism.

José and his wife Ana try to keep their marriage intact in face of the fact that he's jobless while she works in a tuna factory (however smelly the job has turned her to be).

The Russian migrant worker Sergei tells his buddies he used to be a cosmonaut, until joblessness drove him to this part of the world. (Is he serious, or has joblessness made him recede into a fantasy world? We can't tell, and neither can his buddies.)

Santa (Bardem) would do even babysitting just to have work. He tries to be flippant among his buddies, to sound tough, but breaks down into a puddle of tears when alone.

In other words, these men are trying to keep afloat above water. A huge irony then is the last scene, when the group hijacks a ferry and sets out to sea to scatter the ashes of a fallen comrade.

Just as they're starting, the boat's engine stops in the middle of the bay. Unable to do anything, they just sit back in the sun and take in the morning breeze, waiting for the authorities to come pick them up.

Bleak metaphor

This film is related to the unemployment films of British cinema such as Mark Harmon's "Brassed Off" and Peter Cattaneo's "The Full Monty," those late 1990s seriocomic variations on the working-class films of the Free Cinema of Britain in the '60s. But true to the Spanish temper, "Los Lunes al Sol" is edgier, its heart blacker, its humor more bitter.

The central metaphor is bleak, but this visual trope gives the audience a strong sense of human community and participation. Indeed, we are on a boat caught in the doldrums, and we are responsible for one another.

"HARSH YET TENDER." Javier Bardem (left) and a co-star play men trying to survive unemployment.

The film has been described as "a harsh yet tender parable." Judging from the applause after the screening, we would say it is a real crowd-pleaser—in other words, a strong bet for the Oscars.

Despite this film's virtues, though, we still think "Talk to Her" is a finer film, with a broader canvas, not to say a more colorful palette. But there should be no comparison, really.

We believe it was just a case of maneuvering on the part of the Spanish cultural establishment. Probably hoping to hit two birds with one stone, it submitted both films to the Academy Awards.

Had both won, think what a record that would be. The French and the Italians would positively turn livid.

Despite the aggravations, Armida loves her craft very much

By Edmund L. Sicam
Contributor

ACTRESS Armida Siguion Reyna plays a mother for the nth time in "Filipinas," Viva Films' entry in the 2003 Metro Manila Film Festival. But unlike most of her previous roles, Armida doesn't play a *mataray* character in this drama. She's the matriarch of the Filipinas family, which is experiencing turbulent times, much like the Philippines.

"'*Di ako contravida dito, 'di rin naman martir*," says Armida. "The mother is not a passive person because she gets involved in her children's problems. '*Di siya pakialamera* unless her children ask for advice."

Tita Midz, as she is popularly known, has always been a feisty woman, on and off screen. She's one of the more vocal members of the motion picture industry and she marched with other concerned artists to protest censorship during the time of Manoling Morato as Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB) chair.

When she herself assumed the top post at the MTRCB, more than half of the board members were from the entertainment industry. Because of the Armida board's perceived liberal stance, she, too, became the object of street protests demanding her resignation. But former President Joseph Estrada kept her in the MTRCB, until she relinquished her post when the new administration took over following Edsa 2.

Still fighting

Armida has not mellowed. Asked about her image, Armida says, "I don't consciously become *mataray*. It's just that I'm passionate about certain issues. Some people say that's *katarayan*."

She admits, though, that sometimes she can't help but be *suplada*. "'*Pag ayaw kong makipagusap sa tao, nagtataray talaga ako. Akala kasi ng* fans *ang mga artista* should entertain them 24 hours a day. I disagree. *Ang trabaho naming artista* is to entertain them up there on the big screen."

She cites autograph hunters as an example. "*Kung kelan ka kumakain* or when you're shopping, *saka nila hihingin ang* autograph *mo*. I don't mean to be offensive to the fans, but they should also respect my privacy. '*Buti na lang 'di ako* superstar. All stars feel the same way but they consider it their responsibility to be nice to their fans *para kumita ang pelikula*."

"POP LOLA" shows Siguion-Reyna's non-traditional side as a singer.

Armida is also concerned about professionalism. She cites actors who come late for tapings (she's quick to point out, however, that her co-actors in "Filipinas" were always on time) and production designers (PDs) who don't do their jobs well.

Actors usually provide their own costumes, unless it's a period film. Ideally, Armida says, the PDs should come to her house and choose what outfits she should bring to the shoot.

"I cannot bring my entire wardrobe to the set," she bristles.

Professionalism

Then there's the matter of continuity.

"*May mga* PD *riyan, kakausapin ang* maid *ko*. '*Pakisabi kay* ma'am, *isuot niya 'yung* suot-suot *niya sa* sequence so and so.' *Hindi trabaho ng artista ang* continuity. *Dapat alam ng* PD *kung anong isusuot ko. Sabi ng iba dapat makisama ako. Hindi ako makikisama. Mag* pack-up *sila, 'di ko kasalanan. 'Pag tinulungan mo sila ng tinulungan, 'di mo sila tinutulungan.* Professionalism should be institutionalized."

Tita Midz also has words to say about the dubbing process. Since it's harder to shoot a scene with live sound, actors usually dub their dialogue in the studio.

"It's really hard," she says of dubbing. "There are scenes *na hindi mo mapapantayan ang* intensity *ng ginawa mo sa* shooting. *Sa* shooting *kasi*, you have the elements that perk up your energy—the lights, the crew, your co-actors. '*Pag nag*-on *ang* lights and the director shouts 'action,' the energy level is high. In the dubbing room, there are only three of you. *Kailangang maglulundag ka para ma*-reach *mo ang* desired energy level. Next time *talaga, 'pag hindi* live sound, *sisingil ako ng doble*."

Despite these aggravations, Armida loves her craft very much. "It's an outlet for creative expression. It's a job that you like to do, and you still get paid doing it. I cannot see myself behind a desk in an executive office."

Winning debut

In 1972, she made her first full length feature film, "Sa Pagitan ng Dalawang Langit," where she played a leper. Armida went on to win best supporting actress at the Bacolod Film Festival, not bad for a debut film. She had earlier appeared in several 16 mm historical films for television, where she portrayed Sisa, Gabriela Silang and Gregoria de Jesus.

Armida will also be remembered for her musical series on TV, "Aawitan Kita," which went off the air recently after 31 years. Armida is working on a DVD version of the shows.

While working on the "Aawitan Kita" recordings, she also came out with an album that reflects her non-traditional side as a singer. "Pop Lola" features pop songs she usually sings with friends during videoke sessions. Standards like "Smile," "Yesterday I Heard the Rain," and "Can't Take My Eyes Off of You." Then there are OPM hits like "Kahit Konti," "Kahit Na," even Michael V's "Sinaktan Mo ang Puso Ko."

The last cut ("Tagubilin at Habilin") in the CD reflects Armida's vision as an artist and as a Filipino. It's not sung but recited (the words are written by Pete Lacaba) with musical accompaniment by Ryan Cayabyab.

The closing lines go:

"*Ang sabi ng iba/ Ang matapang ay walang takot lumaban*
"*Ang sabi ko naman/ Ang tunay na matapang ay lumalaban kahit natatakot.*
"*Lumaban ka kung inginungudngod and nguso mo sa putik*
"*Bumalikwas ka kung tinatapak-tapakan ka*
"*Buong tapang mong ipaglaban*
"*Ang iyong mga prinsipyo*
"*Kahit hindi ka sigurado*
"*Na agad-agad kang mananalo.*"

How very Armida.

Stars, and bodies, on parade

From page A31

Agustin and Dingdong Dantes. Producer Orly Ilacad of Octoarts Films and its sister company, Canary Films, told INQUIRER Entertainment he spent P250,000 for the float.

"Filipinas" production designer Larry Matic made a typical Filipino living-dining room, complete with a Christmas tree and gifts at its base.

"Crying Ladies" stars Sharon Cuneta, Hilda Koronel and Angel Aquino wore the white shirts they had on in a scene in the movie where they first cried at a dead Chinese man's wake.

The "Gagamboy" float, also by Rodell Cruz, had a replica of Spiderman's spin-off with the actor playing it on the big screen, Vhong Navarro, who was joined by Aubrey Miles, Jay Manalo and director Erik Matti, who also megged "Mano Po 2."

The final float had "Bridal Shower" stars Dina Bonnevie, Cherrie Pie Picache and Francine Prieto sitting on a cardboard wedding cake, with sexy actors Christian Vasquez, Alfred Vargas and Juancho Valentino wearing only black pants and bow ties. Francine herself was in a red bra and a skirt with waist-high slits.

HAVE GUN WILL POSE. The Mayor gamely poses in the firing range in the Recto compound.

BLAZER by Inno Sotto

Photos by
Jim Guiao Punzalan

RED AND RESTFUL slippers ease her tired feet after a hard day's work wearing heels.

OUT OF THE CLOSET

The complete VILMA SANTOS

By Marinel R. Cruz

"STAR for All Seasons" and Lipa City Mayor Vilma Santos now puts public service over her love for show business.

"Show biz is still very much a part of my life," says the star mayor. "But it only comes third to my family and to Lipa City on my priority list."

"Family" is husband Sen. Ralph Recto and 7-year-old son Ryan Christian. She also has a son by actor Edu Manzano—VJ and television host Luis Manzano, 22.

"At this point in my career, I'm already very picky with the roles I play," says the winner of many acting awards. "I'm not getting any younger. A role has to be something that would move me."

She was last seen in Chito Roño's "Dekada '70," based on the novel of Lualhati Bautista, in the 2002 Metro Manila Film Festival. She is also contemplating on becoming a film director someday.

Mayor Vi finds fulfillment in the fact that the Lipeños—residents of Lipa City —respect her and believe that she can do something good for them.

"Their faith in me is priceless," says the city executive who, last Dec. 22, announced she would run for reelection in 2004. Before she finally decided to run for her third and final term as mayor, she also considered running for governor.

"(I will run for mayor because) I want to finish all my projects for Lipa first," she tells INQUIRER Entertainment at the Recto home in the sprawling LPL Compound in Lipa City. "I owe this to my constituents. They are very cooperative."

She confesses her lifestyle has changed a lot since she became mayor in 1998. Aside from having to travel frequently to Lipa, Batangas, from her home in Green Meadows, Quezon City, every weekend, Vilma says she had to have a complete wardrobe makeover.

"I now wear more formal clothes," she says. "I'm the mayor of this city, I have to look like one."

In the heart of the one-hectare family compound in Lipa is her and the senator's four-bedroom home, built in 2002. Right outside the house is a swimming pool and a target shooting area. The house, surrounded by mango trees, has the majestic Bundok ng Susong Dalaga as backdrop.

"As an actress, I was used to wearing jeans, shirts and jackets," says Vilma. She now has several dozens of *barong* Tagalog and corporate suits, but most of them are at the Recto home in Manila.

What did not change, she says, is her penchant for handkerchiefs and scarves, a Vilma Santos trademark. "I never leave home without them," she admits. "*Kaya nga ako nabansagang si Panyo*. I don't feel complete without a hankie or a scarf."

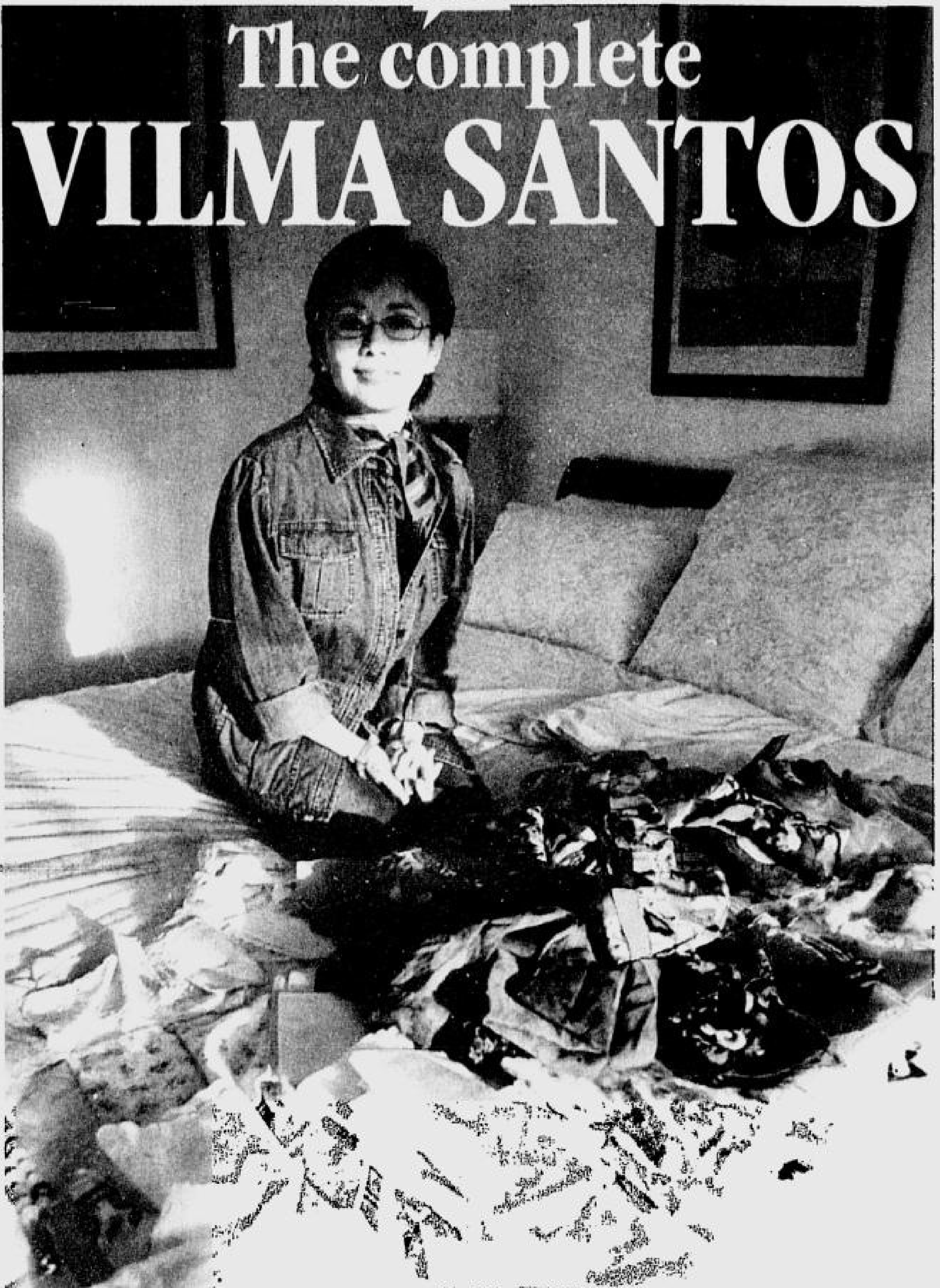
In the Lipa home, Vilma and her husband share a huge, custom-made closet filled with designer suits and some casual clothes. "We also have clothes and shoes in the van," Vilma says, "because we want to make sure we have everything we need wherever we may be."

Blazers. "I have a lot of blazers in my closet. I used to wear a lot of *barong* Tagalog, too. The leather blazer is one of my favorites. I bought it during my latest US trip. I like the color, *maganda kapag maputi ka*. It goes well with a lot of other colors. The style is very flexible. You can match it with a rugged shirt, or, if the weather is really cold, with a turtle neck.

"I also have blazers especially made for me by Inno Sotto, complete with skirt and slacks. I mix and match them."

Skirts. "I only use above-the-knee skirts with rugged attire. For formal wear, the skirt should be an inch below the knee. *Hindi puwedeng maikli, mayor ako eh*."

Jeans. "I'm not so much into imported jeans. What I don't understand is why imported jeans don't fit me well. Local jeans are perfect. I have an Escada pair I bought in Europe. It looks really sexy on me. It's stretchable. I sent someone to Escada here to ask if they have similar pairs. I want to buy as many as I can."



STAR FOR ALL SEASONS floats in a cloud of her trademark handkerchiefs and scarves (top), and teeters on dainty feet shod in her favorite slip-ons.

Accessories. "I love to accessorize. My current favorite is a set of heart-shaped necklace and bracelet made of semi-precious stones. They're really dainty. I look like a virgin (laughs).

"Another favorite is this necklace that I bought in Morocco. It's very expensive so I don't wear it much. I only wear the expensive ones to special occasions. Sometimes, I wear the cheap ones if I know that the venue will be very crowded. *'Pag nawala kasi mambibintang ka pa.*

"I lost a lot of pieces of jewelry in the past. I used to wrap them in tissue paper, *'tapos naitatapon*. Now I count my jewels before and after an engagement. *Pinagtrabahuhan ko rin 'yan*."

Watches. "I have two kinds of watches. There are the ones I use on formal occasions and the ones for casual events. Formal watches are normally smaller than the casual ones. I like small-faced watches better. I can't wear the big ones because I have very small wrists."

Blouse. I bought this Ellen Tracy in the US two years ago. I like it because *lahat ng pinagsuutan ko nito sinabing maganda ako*, maybe because the color, bronze, makes my skin glow. I normally pair it with black pants and a light orange undershirt.

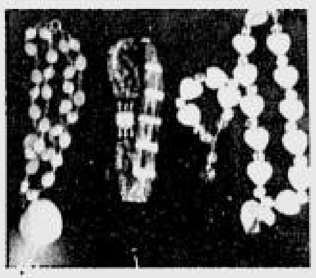
Shoes. "I'm used to wearing high-heeled sandals. I've been wearing them since I was a teenager. I have pairs that are three inches high. I'm very lucky I still have good legs.

"My favorite is this pair of slip-ons that I'm wearing right now. It's comfortable. You don't have to wear nylons. The shoes look good paired with jeans, too.

"I don't really care whether the shoes are imported or locally made. I buy whatever I think fits me well. Unfortunately, I buy more shoes than I can wear. *Madalas isang gamitan lang*. I give most of them away. My nieces are my most common beneficiaries."

Slippers. "After wearing leather shoes all day, you'd want to wear something comfortable when you get home. I like the ones that are made of cotton."

Bags. "I don't like big bags. They don't go well with my small physique. My newest bag is a gift from Ralph. He owed me a gift *kasi*, so when we were watching a movie at Rockwell (in Makati City), I saw this black shoulder bag at the Ferragamo store. He bought it for me and said, *'O, ayan, wala na akong utang, ha.'*



"This red bag is very nice, too. But I'm having a hard time looking for a pair of shoes to match it. This is memorable to me because Jose Mari Chan and his wife Mary Ann gave me this last year as a birthday present. It's a classic.

"I only use this black leather sling bag when I'm in jeans and rubber shoes. I can't be seen carrying big bags because I'm petite."

Perfumes. "I pick a scent depending on my mood. Whenever I travel, I don't go home without buying two things—shades and perfume. Right now, I'm using Miracle by Ralph Lauren. I like it because it smells like soap. *Amoy bagong paligo palagi*. My sister, Maritess, made me try this when we were in the States. *Simula ng ginamit ko, lahat ng nakakaamoy sa akin binabati ako*.

"I also like the scent of Carolina Herrera. It's not too hot. You can never go wrong if you buy sweet-smelling perfumes.

"I also collect perfume bottles, especially those that have unique designs."

Eyewear. "I have a mixture of local and imported brands. I love wearing shades. I experiment with different frames and styles. I have big-framed, narrow-framed and frameless ones. I also collect reading glasses of different frames.

"My current favorite is from Dolce and Gabanna. *Maganda raw kasi ako 'pag suot ko ito*."

Handkerchiefs and scarves. "They are my security blanket. I'm not complete without them. I never leave home without a hankie or a scarf. My hankie and scarf collection can fill two huge bags. *Palagi nga lang nahihingi*.

"I usually put perfume or cologne on the handkerchief. I want to always smell good when I deal with people. It's part of my job."

TWO-TIMER. She has watches for formal occasions and watches for casual times.

LEATHER LOVER. Used to wearing *barong* Tagalog, she nevertheless likes to wear this leather blazer she bought in the US.

SEXY IN ESCADA, she wonders why other imported jeans don't fit her as well.

SM CINEMA

SM Dial-A-Movie 833-9999

NOW SHOWING

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
9295452

1	MANO PO 2
2	HOMECOMING
3	FANTASTIC MAN
4	CAPTAIN BARBELL
5	MALIKMATA
6	CRYING LADIES
7	CAPTAIN BARBELL
8	FILIPINAS

SM CITY CEBU
2313876

1	MANO PO 2
2	FANTASTIC MAN
3	HOMECOMING
4	FILIPINAS
5	CRYING LADIES
6	MANO PO 2
7	MALIKMATA
8	CAPTAIN BARBELL

SM CITY BACOOR
4173059

1	CRYING LADIES
2	FILIPINAS
3	FANTASTIC MAN
4	MANO PO 2
5	CAPTAIN BARBELL
6	MALIKMATA
7	HOMECOMING
8	CRYING LADIES

SM CITY PAMPANGA
7128015

1	FANTASTIC MAN
2	CAPTAIN BARBELL
3	MANO PO 2
4	FILIPINAS
5	MALIKMATA
6	CRYING LADIES

SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT
8294975

1	CRYING LADIES
2	CAPTAIN BARBELL
3	MALIKMATA
4	MANO PO 2

SM BICUTAN
7763055

1	FANTASTIC MAN
2	MALIKMATA
3	MANO PO 2
4	CAPTAIN BARBELL

SM CITY MARILAO

1	MALIKMATA
2	FANTASTIC MAN
3	CAPTAIN BARBELL
4	MANO PO 2

SM STA. MESA
7146522 • 7161416

1	MANO PO 2
2	CRYING LADIES
3	CAPTAIN BARBELL
4	CAPTAIN BARBELL
5	FANTASTIC MAN
6	FANTASTIC MAN
7	MALIKMATA
8	HOMECOMING
9	FILIPINAS
10	MANO PO 2

SM SOUTHMALL
8066068

1	FANTASTIC MAN
2	FILIPINAS
3	CRYING LADIES
4	CAPTAIN BARBELL
5	MANO PO 2
6	THE HOMECOMING
7	MALIKMATA
8	FANTASTIC MAN
9	CAPTAIN BARBELL
10	MANO PO 2

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
9350749

1	FANTASTIC MAN
2	FILIPINAS
3	CRYING LADIES
4	MALIKMATA
5	CAPTAIN BARBELL
6	FANTASTIC MAN
7	MANO PO 2
8	FANTASTIC MAN
9	CAPTAIN BARBELL
10	MALIKMAFA
11	CRYING LADIES
12	HOMECOMING

SM CITY DAVAO
2976936

1	MANO PO 2
2	CAPTAIN BARBELL
3	FANTASTIC MAN
4	FILIPINAS
5	MALIKMATA
6	CRYING LADIES

SM CITY LUCENA
(042) 7100977-80

1	CAPTAIN BARBELL
2	MANO PO 2
3	FILIPINAS
4	FANTASTIC MAN

SM MEGAMALL
6331901 • 6329401

1	MANO PO 2 RESERVE-A-SEAT dial 6366606
2	CRYING LADIES
3	CAPTAIN BARBELL
4	MANO PO 2
5	FILIPINAS
6	HOMECOMING
7	FANTASTIC MAN
8	CRYING LADIES
9	MALIKMATA
10	FANTASTIC MAN
11	CAPTAIN BARBELL
12	FILIPINAS

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
2514302

1	CAPTAIN BARBELL
2	CRYING LADIES
3	FANTASTIC MAN
4	MANO PO 2

SM CITY ILOILO
3209422

1	MALIKMATA
2	RESERVED
3	FILIPINAS
4	FANTASTIC MAN
5	CRYING LADIES
6	MANO PO 2
7	RESERVED
8	CAPTAIN BARBELL

SM CITY MANILA
5235240

1	FILIPINAS
2	FANTASTIC MAN
3	CAPTAIN BARBELL
4	MANO PO 2
5	MALIKMATA
6	CRYING LADIES
7	HOMECOMING
8	FILIPINAS
9	CAPTAIN BARBELL
10	FANTASTIC MAN
11	CRYING LADIES
12	MALIKMATA

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
(088) 8592824

1	MALIKMATA
2	CRYING LADIES
3	CAPTAIN BARBELL
4	MANO PO 2

SM CITY BAGUIO
(074) 4464595

1	MANO PO 2
2	CAPTAIN BARBELL
3	CRYING LADIES
4	FANTASTIC MAN

THE PODIUM CINEMA

18 ADB Avenue, Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong City • 638 9781 - 85

1	CRYING LADIES	10:45 FS/12:15 MF/2:40/5:05/7:30/9:30 LFS/10:00 LMF/11:55 END
2	MANO PO 2	11:00 FS/11:20 MF/2:00/4:40/7:20/9:30 LFS/10:00 LMF/12:10 END

For Seat Reservation, call 633 8975 • LATE NIGHT SCREENING DURING FRIDAYS AND SATURDAYS

Matinee P100.00 Screening until 5pm • Monday thru Friday • Regular P120.00 After 5pm • Saturday • Sunday • Holidays (Reserved Seating)

Movies are subject to change without prior notice

MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS
@ Robinsons Malls

TOP MOVIE THEATER
Annual National
Consumer's Quality Award 2003

NOW SHOWING

DIAL-A-MOVIE FOR ALL BRANCHES 635-5555

Galleria
632-9115-16
687-0593

THX /All Digital

1	HOMECOMING	11:10, 1:20, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50, 10:00 THX
2	MANO PO 2	11:10, 1:50, 4:30, 7:10, 9:50
3	CAPTAIN BARBELL	11:40, 2:15, 4:50, 7:25, 10:00
4	MALIKMATA	10:45, 1:00, 3:15, 5:30, 7:45, 10:00
5	FANTASTIC MAN	10:35, 12:50, 3:05, 5:20, 7:35, 9:50
6	FILIPINAS	10:20, 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
7	CRYING LADIES	11:10, 1:45, 4:20, 6:55, 9:30
8	MALIKMATA	12:30, 2:45, 5:00, 7:15, 9:30
9	FILIPINAS	12:10, 2:30, 4:50, 7:10, 9:30
10	CRYING LADIES	11:40, 2:15, 4:50, 7:25, 10:00, 12:00

MATINEE PRICE: P100 THX cinema / P75 1level cinemas
Mon.- Fri. / 10am- 4pm (EXCEPT HOLIDAYS)

Ermita
526-7185
536-7809 to 12

1	MANO PO 2	11:10, 1:50, 4:30, 7:10, 10:00
2	FANTASTIC MAN	10:10, 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 10:00
3	FILIPINAS	10:10, 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 10:00
4	MALIKMATA	12:40, 12:50, 3:00, 6:10, 9:50
5	CAPTAIN BARBEL	10:15, 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 10:00
6	HOMECOMING	11:00, 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 10:00
7	CRYING LADIES	10:10, 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 10:00

Metro East
Marcos hway
682-8193/99
682-8280

1	MALIKMATA
2	HOMECOMING
3	MANO PO 2
4	FILIPINAS
5	CRYING LADIES
6	CAPTAIN BARBELL
7	FANTASTIC MAN
8	FILIPINAS

Novaliches
935-3229 / 31

1	FANTASTIC MAN
2	FILIPINAS
3	MALIKMATA
4	CRYING LADIES
5	CAPTAIN BARBELL
6	MANO PO 2
7	HOMECOMING
8	MANO PO 2

Cainta
Brgy. Sto. Domingo Ortigas Extension

1	MALIKMATA
2	CRYING LADIES
3	CAPTAIN BARBELL
4	FANTASTIC MAN

Malabon
288-0985/2575

1	CAPTAIN BARBELL
2	CRYING LADIES
3	MALIKMATA
4	FILIPINAS

Sta. Rosa Laguna (049)837-0007		Lipa, Batangas (043)757-3664/312-5870
FANTASTIC MAN	1	MANO PO 2
FILIPINAS	2	FILIPINAS
MALIKMATA	3	CAPTAIN BARBELL
CRYING LADIES	4	FANTASTIC MAN
CAPTAIN BARBELL	5	MALIKMATA

Dasmariñas		Imus (046)471-8169 / 875-5858
MANO PO 2	1	FANTASTIC MAN
HOMECOMING	2	CAPTAIN BARBELL
FANTASTIC MAN	3	CRYING LADIES
CAPTAIN BARBELL	4	MANO PO 2
MALIKMATA	5	FILIPINAS
	6	HOMECOMING

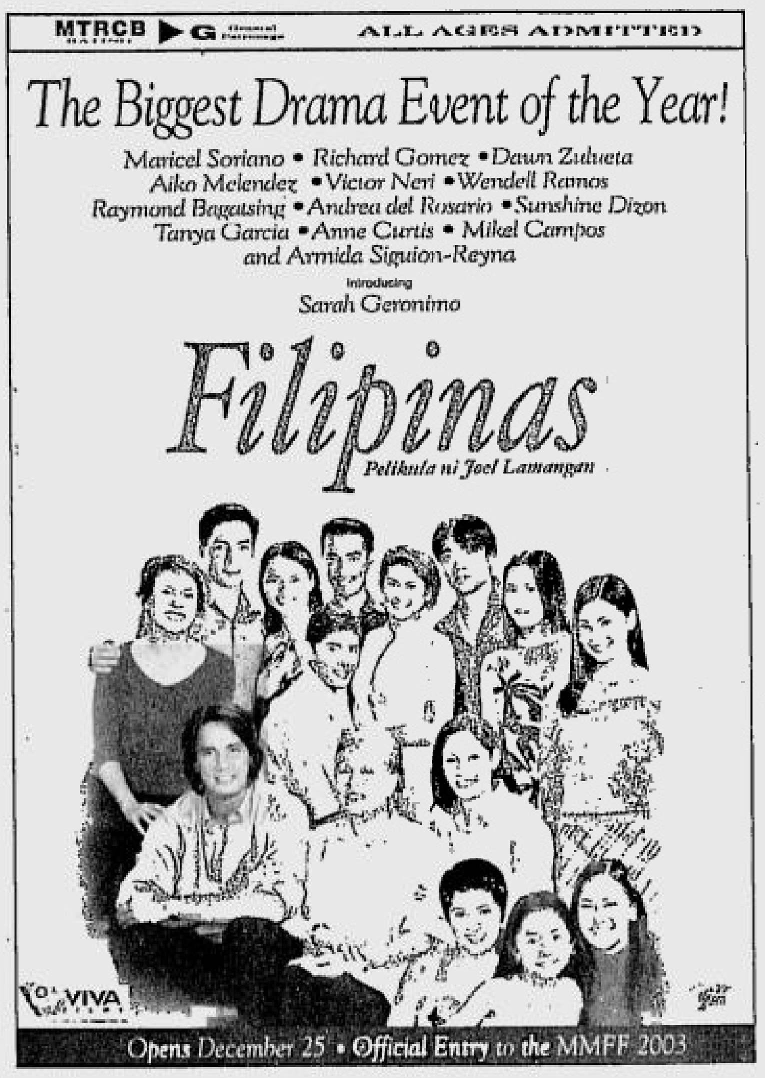
Bacolod (034)441-0450/59		Iloilo (033)336-8070 to 78
MANO PO 2	1	MANO PO 2
FILIPINAS	2	FILIPINAS
CAPTAIN BARBELL	3	CAPTAIN BARBELL
FANTASTIC MAN	4	FANTASTIC MAN
MALIKMATA	5	MALIKMATA
ELF	6	CRYING LADIES

Star Mills
San Fernando Pampanga
(045)875-1927
(045)961-5270

1	FANTASTIC MAN
2	CAPTAIN BARBELL
3	FILIPINAS
4	MALIKMATA
5	CRYING LADIES
6	MANO PO 2

MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

MTRCB RATING ▶ G General Patronage ALL AGES ADMITTED


The Biggest Drama Event of the Year!
Maricel Soriano • Richard Gomez • Dawn Zulueta
Aiko Melendez • Victor Neri • Wendell Ramos
Raymond Bagatsing • Andrea del Rosario • Sunshine Dizon
Tanya Garcia • Anne Curtis • Mikel Campos
and Armida Siguion-Reyna
introducing
Sarah Geronimo
Filipinas
Pelikula ni Joel Lamangan
VIVA
Opens December 25 • Official Entry to the MMFF 2003

NOW SHOWING

MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 Parental Guidance 13 - (Children below thirteen (13) years of age shall be allowed only if accompanied by a parent or an adult.)

This movie contains scary scenes that may not be suitable for very young viewers. parental guidance is proposed

MARVIN AGUSTIN
DINGDONG DANTES
RICKY DAVAO
WOWIE DE GUZMAN
ANNA CAPRI
NIKKI VALDEZ
AND
MS. BARBARA PEREZ
RICA PERALEJO
MALIKMATA
HANDA KA NA BANG MATAKOT?
DIRECTED BY JOSE JAVIER REYES dgpi
ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK FROM OCTOARTS - ORBIT MUSIC
OFFICIAL ENTRY TO THE METRO MANILA FILM FESTIVAL 2003

NOW SHOWING !

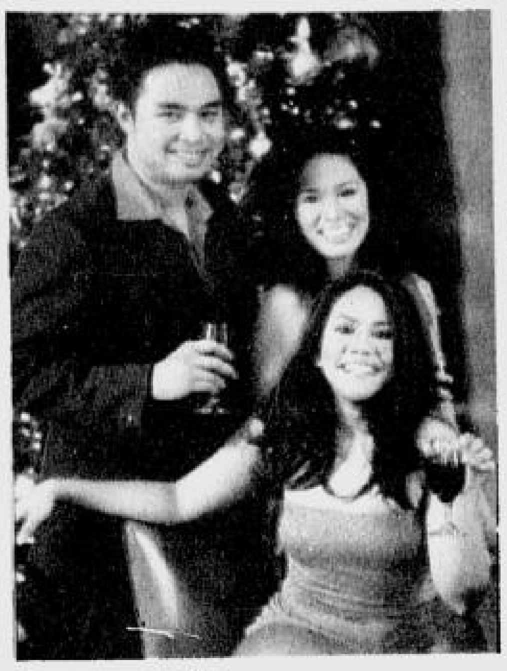
THE BIGGEST FANTASY • COMEDY MOVIE OF THE YEAR
ANG PABORITONG SUPERHERO NG BAYAN

MTRCB RATING ▶ G GENERAL PATRONAGE | ALL AGES ADMITTED

ARA MINA
MICHAEL V.
ZOREN LEGASPI
LEO MARTINEZ
DANICA SOTTO
INTRODUCING
ALICIA MAYER
VIC SOTTO
FANTASTIC MAN
DIRECTED BY
TONY Y. REYES, DGPI
OFFICIAL ENTRY TO THE METRO MANILA FILM FESTIVAL 2003
ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK FROM OCTOARTS - ORBIT MUSIC

COLUMBIA PICTURES presents A WORLD-CLASS FILM

HOMECOMING
ASTONISHING IN ITS SIMPLICITY YET AWE-INSPIRING IN ITS COMPLEXITY
MTRCB RATING
PG-13
THE FILM MERITS AN ENTHUSIASTIC COMMENDATION. IT WILL MOST ASSUREDLY BE TALKED ABOUT AND DEBATED ABOUT.
WONDERFULLY STAGED AMONG THE BEST THIS YEAR
HER JOURNEY BEGINS WHEN SHE RETURNS...
ELIZABETH OROPESA AND ALESSANDRA DE ROSSI
A FILM BY GIL M. PORTES
An OFFICIAL ENTRY to the 2003 METRO MANILA FILM FESTIVAL
NOW SHOWING



3 ON THE 31ST
Singers (from front, clockwise) Bituin Escalante, Jed Maddela and Anna Fegi perform in "Just Had to be New Year's Eve—A Crossover Lounge Series Special," with Bond Samson as musical director, at the Serendipity Lounge of the Discovery Suites at the Ortigas Center in Pasig City, on Dec. 31. They will sing Broadway songs from "Miss Saigon," "Phantom of the Opera" and "Sunset Boulevard" as well as classics by Legrand, Mancini, Bacharach, The Supremes and Streisand. For tickets, call Ticketworld (891-5610), Discovery (635-2222), or Crossover (712-9755, 712-9764).

Araneta Center
ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7

Ali 1	MANO PO 2
Ali 2	FILIPINAS
Ali 3	CAPTAIN BARBEL
Ali 4	CRYING LADIES
Ali 5	MALIKMATA
Ali 6	FANTASTIC MAN
Ali 7	HOMECOMING

NEW FIESTA CARNIVAL
NOW OPEN 4 PM to 10 PM daily

ARANETA COLISEUM

DEC 29	DISNEY ON ICE - 4:30PM / 8 PM
DEC 30	DISNEY ON ICE - 1PM / 4:30PM / 8PM
JAN 1	DISNEY ON ICE - 4:30PM / 8 PM
JAN 2	DISNEY ON ICE - 4:30PM / 8 PM
JAN 3	DISNEY ON ICE - 1PM / 4:30PM / 8PM
JAN 4	DISNEY ON ICE - 1PM / 4:30PM / 8PM
JAN 12	NCA 7-COCK DERBY

FOR TICKETS, CALL TICKETNET AT 911-5555

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA

EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	SEX BOMB / RAMPADORA
ODEON	X-MEN 2
ODEON-2	BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN
ROBEN	BOLO STAR
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SPY / LEGEND OF CROCODILE

QUEZON CITY

ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	ALIPIN
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	BERTUD NG PUTIK
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR

NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA

A	LIBERATED
B	AKO, IKAW, SIYA
C	

MANDALUYONG CITY

SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CINEMA-2	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

CAINTA RIZAL

STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	BIKTIMA
CINEMA-2	ALIPIN
CINEMA-3	WAG KANG KIKIBO
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	MR. SUAVE
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	LORD OF THE RINGS 1
CINEMA-6	CHAVIT
CINEMA-7	BABAE SA BREAKWATER
CINEMA-8	ASBOOBS
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	LOST ISLAND
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	LORDS OF THE RINGS 2
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	STAR RUNNER
CINEMA-12	CABIN FEVER
CINEMA-14	JEEPERS CREEPERS 2
CINEMA-15	ELF

LORES

CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT

NE CINEMAGIC : CABANATUAN

(LAS PINAS)	OUT OF TIME
CINEMA-1	JEEPERS CREEPERS 2
CINEMA-2	FIGHTING TEMPTATIONS
CINEMA-4	COLD CREEK MANOR

UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL

(PARANAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

Stars, and bodies, on parade

From page A32

"Mano Po 2." It was designed by the movie's production designer, Rodell Cruz, and it took eight days to make, said Regal Films publicist Gay Domingo.

The "Homecoming" float, featuring Elizabeth Oropeza and Alessandra de Rossi, had trimmings reminiscent of the famed Pahiyas of Quezon—*kiping*, vegetables etc.—with *lechon* and majorettes. The Gil Portes movie is set in a fictional town called San Isidro.

"Fantastic Man" had life-sized action figures of the superhero and his nemesis, Diabolika, alongside actors Vic Sotto and Ara Mina. "Malikmata" had "dead people" sharing space with live stars Rica Peralejo, Marvin

STARS/ A28

OFFICIAL ENTRY TO THE MMFF 2003
OPENS JANUARY 1 !
LAUGH AND HAVE FUN !
BE HAPPY THIS NEW YEAR !

DINA BONNEVIE CHERRY PIE PICACHE FRANCINE PRIETO
CHRISTIAN VAZQUEZ RODEL VELAYO
BOOTS ANSON ROA GINA PAREÑO
ALFRED VARGAS DOUGLAS ROBINSON JUANCHO VALENTINO

Bridal Shower
directed by JEFFREY JETURIAN
SEIKO Films presentation
Bloessence

MTRCB ▶G General Patronage ALL AGES ADMITTED

Isa lang ang Superbida ng Pasko
Numero Uno!
MARS RAVELO'S CAPTAIN BARBELL
Directed by Mac C. Alejandre
NOW SHOWING
DISTRIBUTED BY VIVA
MILO
CALL 1-908-BARBELL

THEATRE MALL
GREENHILLS
a landmark reinvented!
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND EX
NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 1 MANO PO 2
11:00, 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:00
GP

CINEMA 2 HOMECOMING
11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00
PG 13

TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.
GREENHILLS SHOPPING CENTER, ORTIGAS AVENUE, GREENHILLS, SAN JUAN, METRO MANILA • 7224496

MUSIC MUSEUM
JAN 9,2004 'KYLA RECALL' 8:30 PM
FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION, PLS. CALL ; 721-6726 OR 721-0635

POWER PLANT
CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND EX

HOMECOMING PG13 1:20, 3:30, 5:40, 7.50, 10.00	FANTASTIKMAN GP 12:50, 3:10, 5:30, 7:50, 10:10	MANO PO 2 GP 11:40, 2:20, 5:00, 7:40, 10:30
CRYING LADIES PG13 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00	MALIKMATA PG13 1:25, 3.35, 5:45, 7:55, 10:00	FILIPINAS GP 11:30, 1:40, 3:50, 6:00, 8:10, 10:20

MATINEE P80.00 - FREE SEATING - SCREENINGS BEFORE 5 PM - MON. TO FRI.

ALL DIGITAL SOUND
AYALA CINEMAS
PRESENTS

G1 GLORIETTA 1	G4 GLORIETTA 4	GB1 GREENBELT 1	GB3 GREENBELT 3	ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER
1 MANO PO 2	1 MANO PO 2	ArtFilm 1 FANTASTIC MAN 11 30 2 00 4 30 7 00 9 30	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 1 MANO PO 2 12 50 3 30 6 10 8 50 11 30	THX 1 MALIKMATA
2 FANTASTIC MAN	2 HOMECOMING	2 MALIKMATA 11 05, 1 10, 3 15, 5 20, 7 25, 9 30	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 2 HOMECOMING 12 40 2 50 5 00, 7 10 9 20 11 30	2 CRYING LADIES
3 MALIKMATA	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 3 FANTASTIC MAN 12 30 3 00 5 30 8 00 10 30	Onstage GLOW Dec. 29 & 30 - 8pm	GUARANTEED SEATS 3 FILIPINAS 11 00 1 30 4 00, 6 30 9 00 11 30	3 FANTASTIC MAN
4 CAPTAIN BARBEL	4 FILIPINAS		GUARANTEED SEATS 4 CAPTAIN BARBEL 11 00 1 30 4 00 6 30 9 00 11 30	4 CAPTAIN BARBEL
	5 MALIKMATA		GUARANTEED SEATS 5 HOMECOMING 11 00 1 30 4 00 6 30 9 00 11 30	5 HOMECOMING
	6 CRYING LADIES			
	7 CAPTAIN BARBEL			

For sreening times, call 729-7777. Movies are subject to change without prior notice.
Reserve your seats by texting SURESEATS GB3 or SURESEATS G4 and send to 2333.
Or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations.

MMTA
METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING
EMAIL: mmta@asia.com

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72
1 (DTS) CAPT. BARBEL
2 (SDDS) MALIKMATA
3 (DTS) FANTASTIC MAN
4 GOLD (DTS) HOMECOMING
5 GOLD (DOLBY) CRYING LADIES
6 GOLD (SDDS) FILIPINAS KONG MAHAL
7 GOLD (DOLBY) MANO PO-2
8 [illegible] CRYING LADIES
9 [illegible] FILIPINAS KONG MAHAL
10 [illegible] MANO PO-2

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City
E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City)
tel 687.6963 or 72
1 (DOLBY) CRYING LADIES
2 (DOLBY) MANO PO
3 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC MAN
4 (DOLBY) FILIPINAS KONG MAHAL

Masagana CINEMA 2000
(Pasay) tel 833.3290, 833.3274
1 MANO PO-2
2 HOMECOMING
3 FANTASTIC MAN

starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Mandaluyong) tel 724.4986
1 CRYING LADIES
2 FILIPINAS KONG MAHAL
FANTASTIC MAN
3
CAPT. BARBEL
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) MANO PO-2
5

METROPOLIS star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Alabang) tel 850.4285
1 MANO PO-2
2 CRYING LADIES
3 FANTASTIC MAN
4 FILIPINAS KONG MAHAL
5 MALIKMATA
6 CAPT. BARBEL

M star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Las Pinas) tel 873.5004
1 FANTASTIC MAN
2 CAPT BARBEL

PREMIERE CINEMA THX
(Makati City) tel 892.2503

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 MANO PO
2 FANTASTIC MAN

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376
1 CRYING LADIES
2 CAPT. BARBEL
3 FANTASTIC MAN
4 FILIPINAS KONG MAHAL

GOTESCO CINEMA

Gotesco City
(Manila) tel 734.8588
5 MALIKMATA
6 CAPT. BARBEL
7 (DTS) CRYING LADIES
8 (SDDS) FANTASTIC MAN
9 (DOLBY) MANO PO-2

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781
1 MANO PO-2
2 FANTASTIC MAN
3 FANTASTIC MAN
4 (SDDS) FILIPINAS KONG MAHAL
5 MALIKMATA
6 (DOLBY) CRYING LADIES
7 (DTS) CAPT. BARBEL
8 CRYING LADIES
9 MANO PO-2

Gotesco Commonwealth
tel 951.0083
1 CAPT. BARBEL
2 (SDDS) HOMECOMING
3 (DTS) FANTASTIC MAN
4 (DOLBY) FILIPINAS KONG MAHAL
5 MANO PO-2

Gotesco Ortigas
tel 656.6795
1 CRYING LADIES
2 FANTASTIC MAN
3 (DTS) CAPT. BARBEL
4 MANO PO-2
5 (SDDS) MALIKMATA

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470
1 RESERVE

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724
Dilson FILIPINAS KONG MAHAL
Lords FANTASTIC MAN

Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 FILIPINAS KONG MAHAL
2 MALIKMATA
3 CRYING LADIES
4 CAPT. BARBEL

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238
1 (DOLBY) MANO PO-2
2 CAPT. BARBEL
3 MALIKMATA
4 FILIPINAS KONG MAHAL
5 FANTASTIC MAN

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
1 FILIPINAS KONG MAHAL
2 MALIKMATA

THE CENTER OF ENTERTAINMENT
Araneta Center
Ali MALL CINEPLEX 7
1 MANO PO-2
2 FILIPINAS KONG MAHAL
3 (DOLBY DIGITAL) CAPT. BARBEL
4 (SDDS) CRYING LADIES
5 (DTS) MALIKMATA
6 FANTASTIC MAN
7 HOMECOMING
8
9

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 (DOLBY EX) FANTASTIC MAN
2 FILIPINAS KONG MAHAL
3 (DTS EX) MANO PO-2
4 CAPT BARBEL

Cine Nepo
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.0121
1 FILIPINAS KONG MAHAL
2 CAPT. BARBEL
3 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC MAN
4 (DTS) MANO PO-2

Cine Nepo
(Dagupan City) tel (075) 515.8489
1 MANO PO-2
2 CRYING LADIES
3 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC MAN
4 (DTS) FILIPINAS KONG MAHAL

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa, Laguna) tel (049) 837.0926
1 MANO PO-2
2 CAPT. BARBEL
3 (DTS) CRYING LADIES

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 FILIPINAS KONG MAHAL
2 (DTS) MALIKMATA
3 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC MAN
4 MANO PO 2

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146
1 CAPT. BARBEL
2 (DOLBY) CRYING LADIES
3 (DTS) MALIKMATA
4 FILIPINAS KONG MAHAL

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 MANO PO-2
2 FANTASTIC MAN
3 (DOLBY) MALIKMATA

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
1 MALIKMATA
2 CAPTAIN BARBEL
3 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC MAN
4 (DTS) MANO PO-2

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel)
1 SOON TO OPEN
2 FANTASTIC MAN
3 MANO PO 2

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 (SDDS) MALIKMATA
2 FANTASTIC MAN
3 HOMECOMING
4 (DTS) MANO PO-2

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 (DOLBY) CAPT. BARBEL
2 CRYING LADIES
3 (DTS) MALIKMATA
4 MANO PO-2
5 FANTASTIC MAN

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883
1 FANTASTIC MAN
2 HOMECOMING

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249.2558
1 CAPT. BARBEL
2 MALIKMATA
3 HOMECOMING

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283
1 CAPT. BARBEL
2 MANO PO-2
3 (DTS) CRYING LADIES
4 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC MAN

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel 520.8914
1 CRYING LADIES

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 FILIPINAS KONG MAHAL
2 CAPT. BARBEL
3 MANO PO 2
4 FANTASTIC MAN

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657
1 FILIPINAS KONG MAHAL
2 MALIKMATA

*Movies are subject to change without prior notice

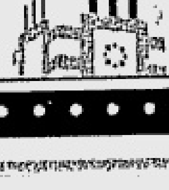
ADVANCED SCREENING THX DOLBY dts SDDS

OPENING IN TIME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City
E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave. (C-5) Quezon City

- The Philippines' first Rocker Seats with retractable armrest
- Stadium seating for unobstructed viewing
- Automated Box Offices for easy ticket purchasing
- 4 Dolby Digital EX cinemas for the best in cinematic sound environment

EXPERIENCE THE DIFFERENCE!
FOR INQUIRIES, CALL 867-8913 TO 17



‘MTB’ faces suspension over Willie joke

Censors complain about Revillame’s crack on Mahal’s birthday episode

By Marinel R. Cruz

VIEWERS of ABC-CBN’s noontime show “Masayang Tanghali Bayan” may have to live without the show for a few days if the censors decide to suspend their favorite show.

The Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB) last Tuesday complained about “MTB” host Willie Revillame’s use of double-entendre jokes.

Revillame has been suspended twice already for similar offenses on the same show.

MTRCB Chair Consoliza Laguardia said she and a three-member adjudication board met with ABS-CBN executives last Dec. 23 to complain about Revillame’s conduct in the Dec. 19 episode of “MTB.”

Members of the adjudication board are film director Joey Romero, journalist Ed Sicam and lawyer Eric Mallonga.

In the Dec. 19 episode, co-host Mahal was celebrating her birthday. Revillame greeted her by saying, “*Sana ma*-devirginize *ka na*.”

He also introduced guest singer Ogie Alcasid as “the Big Bird of Asia.” The singer was promoting his movie “Captain Barbell.”

One of Alcasid’s co-stars in the movie is singer Regine Velasquez, known in show business as Asia’s Songbird.

ABS-CBN executives are scheduled to meet with the MTRCB on Jan. 5 to decide on Revillame’s case, according to Sicam.

“When we met with them last week, we told them what their options were,” he said. “Its their turn to decide which option to take.”

Sicam said that if the network would refuse to penalize Revillame for the violation, the MTRCB could ask an adjudication committee to investigate the complaint.

The committee could issue a preventive suspension order against “MTB,” much like what it did in 1999 when it suspended the airing of the show for 20 days. The MTRCB also suspended Revillame and co-hosts John Estrada and Randy Santiago for their jokes and vulgar behavior, and for their treatment of contestants in the Calendar Girl segment of the show.

Last July, ABS-CBN suspended Revillame and Estrada for one week for using the terms “BJ,” which is widely understood to mean “blow job,” and “Jack Call,” which is a euphemism for masturbation.

In one episode, Revillame and Estrada teased Mahal about her cleavage, the censors noted.

ABS-CBN said it would investigate the complaint, but no action has been taken yet.

Pre-taped episodes of “MTB” are showing during the holidays and the show will resume live broadcast on Jan. 5, INQUIRER Entertainment learned.

BARE BRIDE Francine Prieto (in red) rides the “Bridal Shower” float with (from left) Douglas Robinson, Christian Vasquez, Cherrie Pie Picache and Alfred Vargas. JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

Stars, and bodies, on parade

By Jocelyn Valle
Contributor

STARS led by Sharon Cuneta, Bong Revilla, Regine Velasquez, Judy Ann Santos and Susan Roces showed their support for the Metro Manila Film Festival by joining parades in key cities nationwide to promote the event.

After parading the stars in San Fernando in Pampanga, Cagayan de Oro and Cebu, the film fest had its final march of stars last Wednesday, Christmas Eve, in Metro Manila before officially opening simultaneously nationwide on Christmas Day. The stars rode on imaginatively designed floats. A prize of P75,000 was to be awarded to the best float on the film fest’s awards night on Dec. 27 at the PICC Plenary Hall, according to MMFF executive committee member Wilson Tieng.

The stars joined other parade participants and organizers as early as 11 a.m. Christmas Eve at the coffee shop of the Westin Philippine Plaza hotel in the CCP Complex, the event’s assembly venue. They were gathered according to the productions they represented.

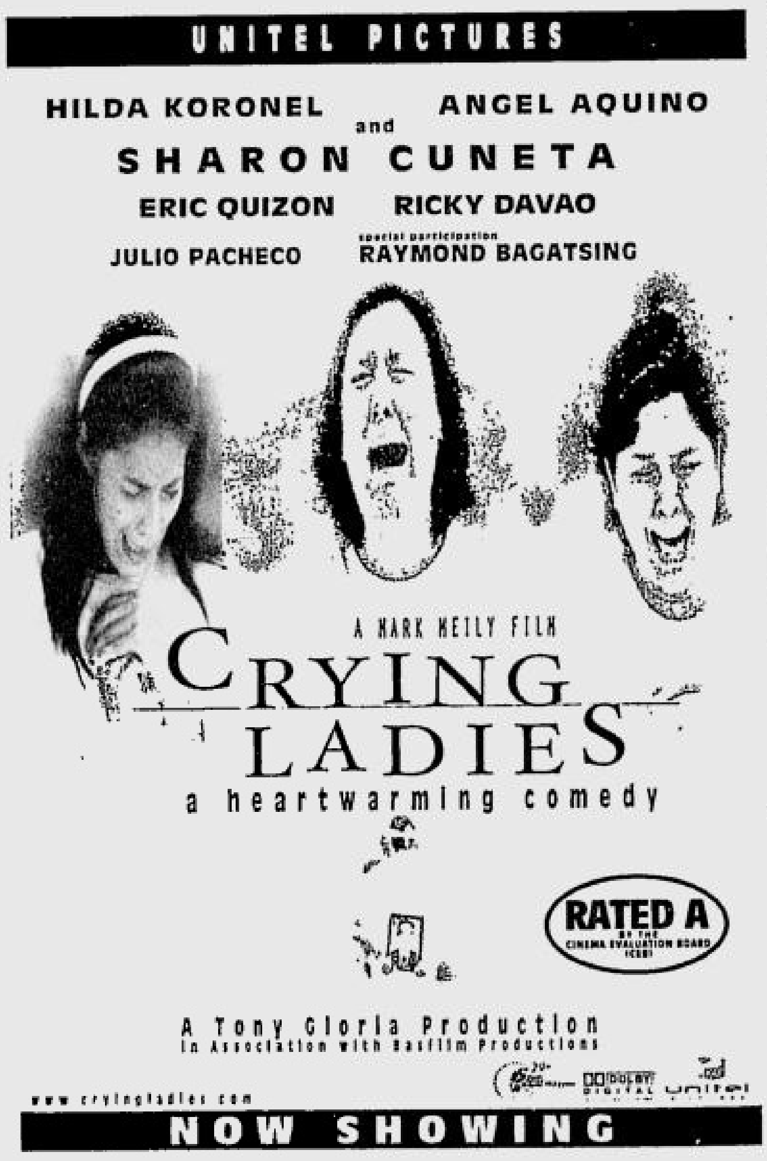
The cast (minus Rufa Mae Quinto, as villainess Freezy, who left for the United States a few days ago) and staff of Premiere Productions’ “Captain Barbell” were at a big, round table having lunch and exchanging stories. They were all clad in yellow promotional shirts bearing the logo of the superhero. Only Bong Revilla was in costume.

From the starting point in the CCP grounds, the parade went from the southern section of Roxas Boulevard up to the Baclaran area, through the Rizal Park, and ended at the Quirino Grandstand.

“Mano Po 2” stars Susan Roces, Christopher de Leon and Judy Ann Santos joined Zsa Zsa Padilla, Richard Gutierrez and Chynna Ortaleza on the Chinese temple-inspired float of

STARS/ A31

THE EPIC TRADITION CONTINUES
When there is love, a family comes together.
SUSAN ROCES
CHRISTOPHER DE LEON
LORNA
ZSA ZSA PADILLA
KRIS AQUINO
JUDY ANN SANTOS
CARMINA VILLARROEL
JAY
RICHARD GUTIERREZ
ALESSANDRA
KAYLLE
CHYNNA
ANGEL
A FILM BY ERIK MATTI
Mano Po 2
MY HOME
NOW SHOWING
A Regal Entertainment Inc.. An official entry to 2003 Metro Manila Film Festival
PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE WWW.MANOPO2.COM


UNITEL PICTURES
HILDA KORONEL and ANGEL AQUINO
SHARON CUNETA
ERIC QUIZON RICKY DAVAO
JULIO PACHECO special participation RAYMOND BAGATSING
A MARK MEILY FILM
CRYING LADIES
a heartwarming comedy
RATED A BY THE CINEMA EVALUATION BOARD (CEB)
A Tony Gloria Production
In Association with Basfilm Productions
www.cryingladies.com
NOW SHOWING

The country's
one and only
private cinema.
Now it can be yours.

For private movie screenings, intimate parties and impressive presentations.

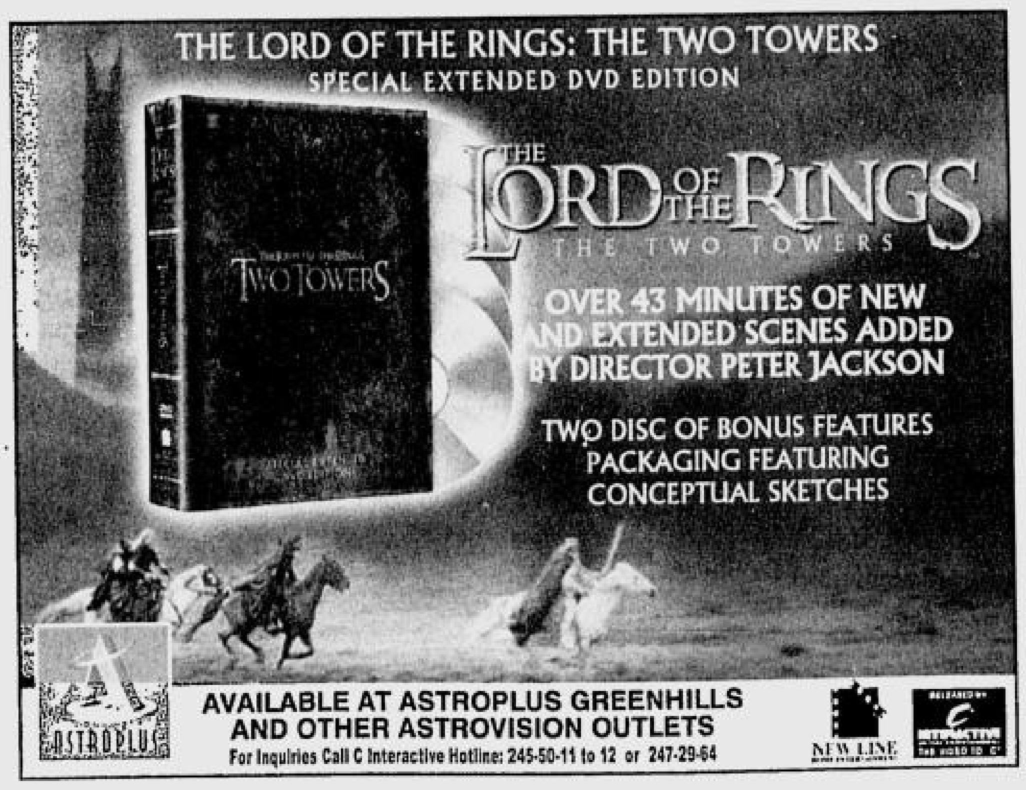
Package includes Popcorn and Drinks, Parking Passes, Timezone Gamepass & Invitations.

Rates vary depending on Peak, Regular & Off-Peak slots.

For inquiries & reservations, call 752-7862 or 757-3860 to 63.

GREENBELT 3
mycinema
AYALA CENTER

The Perfect Venue
Movie premieres the way it should be done...
The right way.
GREENBELT 1
Onstage
AYALA CENTER
At Onstage Greenbelt 1 with 800 luxurious seats, latest digital system, stadium seating, stylish lobby.
Also available for other types of live presentation and entertainment
For inquiries and reservations, call 752-7862 or 752-7877.


THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE TWO TOWERS
SPECIAL EXTENDED DVD EDITION

OVER 43 MINUTES OF NEW AND EXTENDED SCENES ADDED BY DIRECTOR PETER JACKSON
TWO DISC OF BONUS FEATURES
PACKAGING FEATURING CONCEPTUAL SKETCHES
AVAILABLE AT ASTROPLUS GREENHILLS AND OTHER ASTROVISION OUTLETS
For Inquiries Call C Interactive Hotline: 245-50-11 to 12 or 247-29-64
ASTROPLUS
NEW LINE

ORG & Ortigas & Company Limited Partnership
Present
The 1st Ortigas Countdown 2004
"There is definitely no better way to celebrate New Year..."
Be among the few to witness history!
December 31,2003
9:00 pm
Prestige parking,
Carpark A, ADB Avenue,
Ortigas Center, Pasig City
(Fronting ADB Building
and Robinson's Galleria Mall)
Everyone is invited to the
RUBERVIA PARTY
for FREE !
With Manila's top
DJs Elmer Dado,
Mon Maramba,
JT Ruis, Kevin Ruiz, MCJ
giving you the finest selection of
disco house tracks
for your
absolute partying pleasure.
In cooperation with
Bank
dam
Gr0b0h0.com
CONVERSE
Also in partner with
LEMON
MUTOH
Supported by:

BUSINESS

E-mail: pr_business@inquirer.com.ph
Website: www.inq7money.net

Editor Raul O. Marcelo
Assistant Editor Corrie S. Narisma

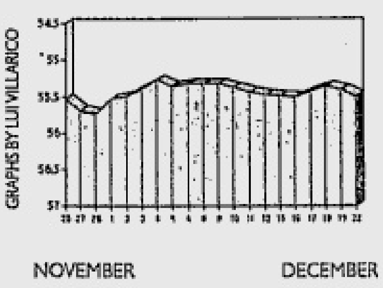
SMB
hp invent ProLiant ML370 Server
Intel Pentium III 1.40 GHz Processor
256 MB (PC133-MHz Registered ECC SDRAM memory)
512KB second-level ECC cache
starts at Php79,000
INTEGRATED COMPUTER SYSTEMS, INC. (ICS)
Tel. 727-3801 Website; www.ics.com.ph

4th quarter growth seen at 4.4%

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

PESO-DOLLAR RATE



GRAPHS BY LUI VILLARICO

₱ 55.59 = $ 1
As of 5 p.m., Dec. 23, 2003

¥ 107.08 = $ 1
As of 5 p.m., Dec. 26, 2003

GOLD: $$408.90-409.40
per ounce Hong Kong, Dec. 23, 2003

STOCK MARKET

Stocks seen rising further

LOCAL stocks are still seen to benefit from window-dressing activities during the year's last two trading days this week.

Eagle Equities Inc. president Joseph Roxas said that while some investors and traders were still on a holiday mode, traditional yearend window-dressing would still lift share prices.

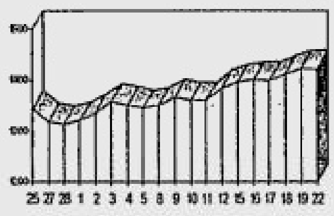
"It will affect not so much the big stocks but the second- and third-liners which, in turn, may not affect the index anymore," Roxas said.

"But if you'll look at the All-Shares index, it is that which is likely to rise sharply," he said.

The main-share Philippine Stock Exchange composite index (Phisix) closed at 1,424.52 during the shortened trading week before Christmas,

STOCKS/ B2

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas is expecting growth in the fourth quarter to match the 4.4-percent expansion in gross domestic product in the third quarter on account of increased consumer spending and continued improvement in services.

"I think our GDP would grow between 4.2 and 4.4 percent in the last quarter and this range would allow us to meet the 4.2-percent full-year growth target," BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said.

The economy exceeded the 3.8- to 4.3-percent growth target and expanded by 4.4 percent in the third quarter due to the strong showing of the farm sector. In the last quarter, the target is to grow by as much as 4.6 percent.

The BSP chief said that strong consumer spending in the fourth quarter would drive the economy forward to match the previous quarter's improvement. At the same time, manufacturing and services would continue to pull through in response to increased consumer demand.

The agriculture sector must expand by about 3.2 percent, industry should accelerate by 4.7 percent, and services must improve by 5.3 percent in the current quarter to support the target GDP growth, according to economic managers.

While a bit delayed, the increase in exports in the last three months of the year should help push the growth momentum toward the end of the year, the BSP chief added. Export receipts are expected to grow by only 2 percent or even lower for the year against a target of 5-8 percent.

Next year, the government said the economy as measured by the GDP would grow between 4.9 and 5.8 percent on the back of an improving global economy and continued strength of the domestic industries.

Economic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri earlier said that the higher growth in 2004 would be achieved given the absence of factors that dragged down the economy this year, particularly the El Niño weather disturbance that slowed down farm output, and the Middle East conflict that affected global demand and exports.

Export growth should hit 10 percent next year while imports would continue expanding by 11

4TH QUARTER/ B2

Bourse uncovers more trading violations

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange has uncovered more violations of the Securities Regulation Code by at least 10 brokerage firms in the aftermath of the Asian Capital Equities (ACE) Inc. scandal.

INQUIRER sources said the PSE and the Securities and Exchange Commission were still in a dilemma on whether to disclose the list of these so-called "bad brokers" as a warning to the investing public.

The alleged violations were discovered after a PSE audit similarly exposed fraud and other violations by ACE, a brokerage which the local bourse recently took over with the go-ahead from the SEC.

Officials from the SEC and the PSE, through the compliance and surveillance group, had been meeting to address this issue of erring brokers prior to the Christmas holidays.

Unlike ACE, however, the SEC has yet to issue any cease-and-desist order against any of these brokers. The PSE's charges were still under study, the sources added.

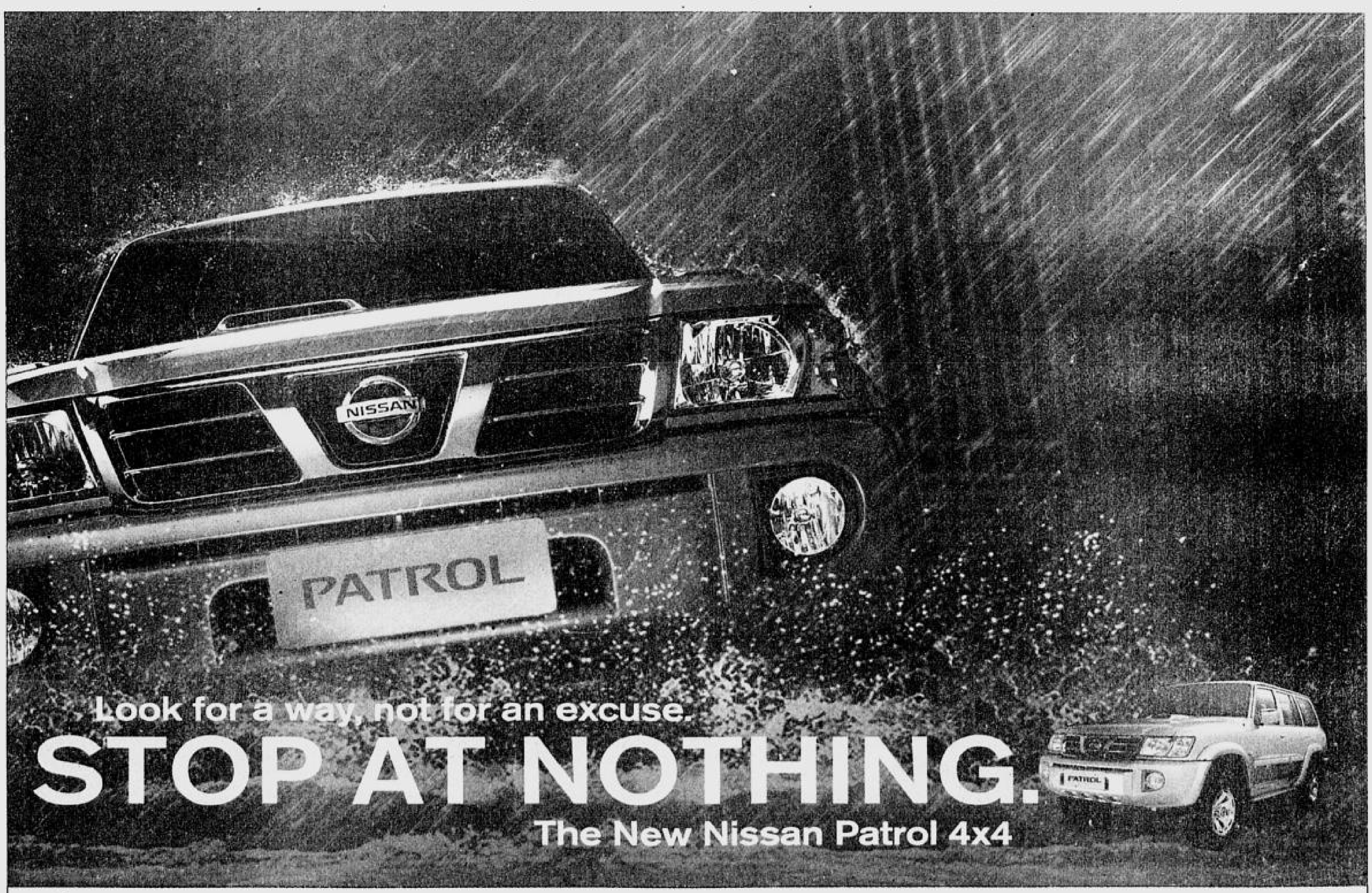
As a self-regulatory organization, the PSE has the mandate to police its own ranks.

In the case of ACE, the PSE is building up a court case after finding "reasonable ground" to believe that the brokerage had committed four counts of SRC violations.

The first provision allegedly violated was Sec. 26, which declares it unlawful to engage in anything that operates as a fraud or deceit upon any person.

Another violation cited was that of Sec. 30.2, which seeks "fair" and "honest" dealings in securities and provides financial safeguards, including the establishment of minimum capital requirements, acceptance of custody and use of securities of customers and the use of deposits/balance sheets of customers.

The other violations concerned restrictions on the borrowings by members, brokers and dealers as a percentage of net capital as well as the obligation to provide the SEC with records and reports at any time deemed as necessary for the protection of investors.



PATROL

SHIFT_the future NISSAN

Assembled and distributed by:
Universal Motors Corporation
www.mynissan.com.ph

METRO MANILA DEALERS: CORE AUTOMOTIVE RESOURCES, INC. (Makati) Tel. Nos. 810-0151 / 812-7538 / 818-4598 / 892-6217 • CORE AUTOMOTIVE RESOURCES, INC. (Quezon Ave.) Tel. Nos. 742-5192 / 743-1529 / 35 / 39 • UNIVILLE MOTORS CORP. (Universal Service & Technical Center) Tel. Nos. 816-7073 to 75 / 892-7636 • Service With A Touch (SWAT) Tel. No. 810-0151 loc. 334 / 347 • NISSAN CENTRAL MANILA Tel. Nos. 252-3566 / 251-8081 to 67 / 251-9054 to 58 • MANTRADE DEVELOPMENT CORP. (Makati) Tel. Nos. 843-3316 to 23 / 843-8011 / 812-7701 • NISSAN ALABANG Tel. Nos. 873-2845 to 49 / 873-2770 to 71 / 873-2789 • NISSAN U.N Avenue (Manila) Tel. Nos. 400-1020 / 400-2177 / 404-2439 • NISSAN GALLERY-ORTIGAS Tel. Nos. 633-2545 / 635-5888 / 438-4539 • NISSAN NORTH EDSA Tel. Nos. 455-8980 / 330-5331 to 50 • NISSAN COMMONWEALTH, INC. Tel. Nos. 932-0428 / 932-4001 • LUZON DEALERS: NISSAN SOUTHWOODS Tel. Nos. 699-2400 to 02 / (049) 241-3040 / (046) 430-1683 to 84 • NISSAN NAGA Tel. Nos. (054) 472-3577 to 79 • XENTREX AUTOMOTIVE, INC. (Pangasinan) Tel. Nos. (075) 522-0656 / 522-0526 / 515-6192 • WORLD CARS, INC. (Bulacan) Tel. Nos. (044) 766-0492 / 766-0191 / 673-1200 • NISSAN PAMPANGA Tel. Nos. (045) 961-5481 / 961-5461 to 62 • ROYCE MOTOR CENTER, INC. (Nueva Ecija) Tel. Nos. (044) 463-7210 to 12 Santiago, Isabela Tel. Nos. (078) 682-8701 / 682-6707 Pampanga Tel. Nos. (045) 961-7773 to 74 • VISAYAS DEALERS: NISSAN ILOILO (S & J MOTORS, INC.) Tel. Nos. (033) 320-4051 to 54 • NISSAN FAMILY CENTER ILOILO Tel. Nos. (033) 320-2248 / 320-2064 • NISSAN BACOLOD Tel. Nos. (034) 435-1102 / 434-8051 to 52 / 434-8530 / 433-2907 / 433-0562 / 67 • NISSAN CEBU DISTRIBUTORS, INC. Tel. Nos. (032) 346-8422 to 25 / 345-0006 to 07 / 346-0350 / 345-1124 / 346-8430 to 31 / 345-1450 • MINDANAO DEALERS: NISSAN FAMILY CENTER CAGAYAN DE ORO Tel. Nos. (08822) 732-672 / 733-4444 / (088) 856-3558 • NISSAN DAVAO Tel. Nos. (082) 221-1914 / 16 / 18 / 227-0308 to 09 General Santos City Tel. No. (083) 552-3228

3 YEAR WARRANTY

Maybank
has made it to the FT500 list this year.
Already one of Asia's best banks, Maybank made it to the Financial Times' annual listing of the world's largest companies. It's all about knowing and understanding our customers and shareholders. And most of all, caring for them. Allow us to serve your banking needs today.
Member PDIC. Deposits insured up to ₱100,000
For the Branch nearest you, call 521-7451. Or log on to www.maybank2u.com
Maybank

Quota fish alive

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

THROUGH no fault of theirs, several local garment companies lost and are still losing tons of money--in dollars, at that!

I heard that millions of dollars worth of shipment of locally made garments were rotting in Customs warehouses in the United States.

As usual, it was all thanks to our dearly beloved government. Again, somebody at the Department of Trade and Industry goofed.

And all that was just in time for the frenzied Christmas shopping in the world's richest consumers in the world's biggest economy--i.e. not the Philippines.

* * *

THAT country is of course the United States. Early this month, the US Customs slapped an emargo on several garment shipments from the Philippines.

To give you an idea on how painful such an embargo could be to Filipino garment exporters, tied up to the embargo was the shipment of one company alone worth $20 million.

That is a lot of money, a big fortune, as a matter of fact, particularly at this time of economic hardship for a company in an industry which is not exactly in the pink of health.

Local garment companies are losing out to their competitors in Asia, particularly China and Vietnam. I am not kidding. Before you laugh, Vietnam is actually already exporting more garments than the Philippines.

The local garment companies needed that US Customs embargo like Gloriaetta's election handlers needed another of her outbursts on camera. It's not good PR.

* * *

FROM what I gathered, the embargo had something to do with the Philippine quota on garment exports to the United States.

Selling garments to the US is not like selling fish in Farmers Market, dead or alive or whatever. There are strict rules to follow. The US imposes a limit.

It seems the Philippines already exceeded the limit on certain garment items, particularly knitted wear and cotton pants, such as denim jeans.

Unfortunately for the exporting local companies, the US Customs officials were harder to talk to than their counterparts in the Philippines.

Into this poor Third World country, even banned items such as toxic wastes can come, as long as the importers, well, "talk" to some bigshots in Customs.

The US Customs enforces rules strictly on shipments from poor countries like the Philippines of something which is intrinsically not as bad as toxic waste.

I mean, it's not as if jeans are radioactive materials, although American teenagers, boys and girls alike, love to wear them showing a lot of lower back cleavage.

* * *

ANYWAY, that was not the first time that the US Customs barred the entry of garment shipments from the Philippines, because we maxed out our quota.

It used to happen every now and then. Some government officials tried their best in managing the quota by making a killing by selling export allocation under the table.

This time around, nevertheless, my contacts in the local garment industry were not ready to throw any accusation of corruption.

None of them could say whether or not somebody made money out of the US export quota, simply because none of them had any proof.

Still, it is clear that, if it was due to corruption, the reason for the US Customs embargo this time was pure and simple mismanagement--by the government, of course.

* * *

SOMETIME in the middle of the year, it became clear to the local garments industry that the country would exceed its US quota on certain items.

The GTEB, or the Garments and Textile Export Board, was giving out temporary one-time export allocation over-the-counter.

Such an allocation must eat into the US export quota of the local garment companies which, with their good track record, earned the so-called permanent allocation.

They are usually the bigger companies. Thus they normally attract the bigger orders from the US.

Thus they must program the use of their allocation to time the bulk of their shipment with the Christmas season, meaning, towards the latter part of the year.

Thus, when the government is a mood for a little mismanagement, by exceeding the quota, for instance, only those companies suffer.

* * *

SEVERAL months ago, their buyers in the United States already warned them about the possibility that the Philippines would hit the US-imposed limit.

The question which most of those buyers asked was, what was our government doing about the problem? They gave only one answer, which was...well, nothing!

By last November, it was already evident that the Philippines would exceed the quota, and the danger of that US customs embargo became real.

Still, the local garment industry tried to reason out with somebody at DTI, asking him to seek assistance from Gloriaetta directly.

For one, Gloriaetta used to head the GTEB herself during the time of Tita Cory, and she therefore must have a soft spot for the industry.

Moreover, Gloriaetta was such an avid supporter of the Iraq war launched by US President George "Pareng Dubious" Bush, perhaps she could ask him for a small favor. Something like, you know, could our garment companies break the US trade and Customs rules please?

* * *

A GROUP of garment exporting firms asked the Palace for a letter to Pareng Dubious which they themselves volunteered to hand-carry to Washington.

The garment industry started the lobby even before the embargo. Nobody moved a finger, not in the Palace and not in DTI.

From what I heard, somebody in the Palace whispered to Gloriaetta that it was such a small inconsequential thing to bother Pareng Dubious with.

Look, it would only mean millions of dollars in losses to local garment companies which are not exactly looking at a bright future because of stiff competition from other Asian countries.

Finally, when the US Customs declared embargo, the Palace relented and gave the industry the letter, the request in which, well, the US government promptly rejected.

* * *

NOW everybody is pointing at somebody else for the blame. Everybody of course does not want to catch the ire of Gloriaetta. People in the industry are saying she still does not know what happened.

The head of the GTEB is the brother of Social Welfare Secretary Dinky Soliman. The GTEB is responsible for managing the quota.

Talk also goes around the industry that somebody at DTI, an undersecretary, was too arrogant to listen to the views of the garment industry, particularly when it was obvious that the government was issuing too much one-time temporary allocation,.

Where the ax will fall, is hard to say. Maybe, most like, it will not. As usual!

4th quarter growth seen at 4.4%

From page B1

percent.

Neri said that election spending from the private sector that is estimated to reach P30 billion should help boost the GDP. He said he believed that the first half of the year leading to the elections would be "one big fiesta" nationwide.

Buenaventura said that a modest inflation this year of about 3.1 percent would support the growth objectives next year and sustain the regime of price stability. Inflation should average between 4 and 5 percent in 2004.

In 2002, the economy as measured by GDP grew by 4.6 percent, the strongest growth since the 1997 Asian crisis.

This announcement appears as a matter of record only

STANDARD INSURANCE CO., INC.
The Insurance Standard
(a Cooperative Partner of Zurich Financial Services)

Has increased its authorized capital to

Php 1,000,000,000.00

and

Paid-Up Capital

to

Php 600,000,000.00

as

Approved by the Securities and Exchange Commission

on

December 17, 2003

STANDARD INSURANCE CO., INC., *The Insurance Standard* has the highest Paid-up Capital in the industry at P600,000,000.00; Backed-up by Reinsurers highly rated by Standard & Poor's; Accredited with most Banks & Financial Institutions; Quality Management Systems-ISO 9000:2001 Certified; Widest branch network located in key cities of the country; The leader in Motorcar Insurance with the Most extensive Car dealer tie-ups; The only insurance company with its own Technical Department which provides Technical Assistance all over the country.

Tel Nos.: Head Office - (02)400-7777 Corporate Marketing Group – (02)750-0378; Metro Manila Branches: Caloocan - (02)3650856,
Head Office Branch - (02)522-4472, Makati - (02)8911041, Ortigas - (02)7244024, Ayala - (02)8940793, West Avenue - (02)4153772;
Metro Cebu - (032)2544337; Metro Davao - (082)2212929
Website: http//:www.standardinsurancecom.com Email: inquiry@standard-insurance.com

Stocks ...

From page B1

gaining from 1,422.24 the previous week as window-dressing continued to boost prices of blue chips.

Roxas said resistance for the Phisix would likely be at 1,430.

"In the first week of January, that's when there will likely be correction from the yearend window-dressing but usually January is also bullish," he said.

This week, Roxas said the focus would be on stocks like Lepanto Consolidated Mining, Oriental Petroleum, Manila Mining, Waterfront Philippines Inc., Mabuhay Vynil, Export and Industry Bank, SPI Technologies, Petron Corp., Ionics Inc. and Music Corp.

"With the close of the year fast approaching, trading activity has thinned. The shortened trading week has also affected buyer interest," said BPI Securities.

"We expect buying interest to continue to wane, perhaps with the index moving into negative territories over the next few trading days," it said.

BPI Securities added that selling pressure would likely pick up with the start of trading in the New Year as short-term investors start to unwind bought positions. *Doris C. Dumlao*

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of December 23, 2003)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	3,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17	17.25	17	17.25	25,600
Bank of the Phil. Islands	46	46.5	46	46.5	334,600
China Banking Corp.	675	675	675	675	380
Citystate Savings Bank	16	16	16	16	5,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	34	34	34	34	98,400
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.55	0.56	0.55	0.56	1,430,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	27	27	26.5	26.5	113,100
Philippine National Bank	24.25	24.25	24	24 25	42,500
Phil. Savings Bank	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	5,000
Security Bank Corp.	16.5	16.5	16.5	16.5	5,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	25	27	25	27	600
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
ATR Kim Eng Fin. Corp.	2.34	2.34	2.3	2.3	50,000
First Abacus Financial	0.44	0.5	0.44	0.5	320,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	170	170	170	170	250
Manulife Financial Corp.	1740	1750	1735	1750	1,590
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.32	1.34	1.32	1.34	431,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	210	210	210	210	11,200
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1305	1320	1305	1320	880
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	25.5	25.5	25.5	25.5	38,700
Diversified Fin. Network	2	2	2	2	5,000
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.69	0.7	0.69	0.7	3,650,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	845	845	845	845	26,090
Ipeople Inc.	0.97	0.99	0.97	0.98	540,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.04	0.04	0.039	0.04	2,500,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	0.9	0.91	0.89	0.9	5,180,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	950	950	930	935	39,970
Philweb Corp.	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	51,000,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	14.75	14.75	14.75	14.75	66,000
Manila Electric Co. B	24	24.25	24	24 25	228,300
Petron Corp.	2.24	2.36	2.24	2.32	10,265,000
Salcon Power Corp.	2.06	2.06	2.06	2.06	50,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.95	0 96	0.95	0.96	300,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.36	1.36	1.36	1.36	209,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	125,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	310,000
Union Cement Corp.	1	1	1	1	11,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	4,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	32	32	32	32	9,500
Jollibee Foods Corp.	17.5	18.25	17.5	18.25	634,700
San Miguel Corp. A	53.5	54	53.5	54	43,400
San Miguel Corp. B	63	63.5	63	63.5	83,800
Universal Robina Corp.	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4	10,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	300,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Atok-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	8.5	8.5	8.5	8.5	5,000
Ayala Corp.	5.3	5.3	5.2	5.3	5,210,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	9,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.023	0.025	0.023	0.025	4,000,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.84	0.86	0.84	0.86	3,510,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	3,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	30,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	10,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.49	0.49	0.48	0.48	180,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.175	0.18	290,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.049	0.049	0.049	0.049	100,000
Aries Prime Res. Inc.	1.98	1.98	1.98	1.98	7,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	18.75	18.75	18.5	18.75	164,600
Ionics Inc.	1.44	1.44	1.44	1.44	2,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.04	1.06	1.04	1.06	3,601,000
Magnum Holdings Inc.	1	1	1	1	100,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.28	0.29	0.28	0.28	10,290,000
Music Corp.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	250,000
South China Resources Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	90,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0 34	0 37	0 34	0.37	50,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Metro Alliance Holdings	0.88	1	0.88	1	40,000
Matsushita Elec Phil Corp.	6.9	7.2	6.9	7	15,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	2,000,000
Prime Gaming Phils. Inc.	26	26	26	26	1,000
Pryce Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	1,500,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	13	13	13	13	323,800
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.56	0.56	0.55	0.55	1,530,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	20,000
Philippine Racing Club	3.7	3 7	3 7	3.7	2,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	25	25	25	25	563,700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series M	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series S	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	500
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,500
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	7	7.1	7	7	11,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	6	6.1	6	6	6,888,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	100,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	500,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.215	0.22	1,100,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.02	1.04	1.02	1.04	1,000,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.0775	0.0775	0.0775	0.0775	100,000
SM Development Corp.	1.1	1.1	1.04	1.04	9,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.5	6 5	6.4	6.5	2,554,000
MINING					
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.225	0.225	0.225	0.225	1,370,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.29	0.29	0.28	0.28	1,710,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	8,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.37	0.38	0.37	0.38	1,150,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.41	0.41	0.41	0.41	200,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.003	30,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	10,000,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.175	0.175	0.175	0.175	400,000

	SHARES	VALUE(P)
Bank & Fin Svc	2,878,100	31,793,095.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	112,538,160	180,957,125.00
PRO	12,251,000	59,301,610.00
Mining	12,430,000	1,371,250.00
OIL	40,400,000	192,000.00
GRAND TOTALS:	180 497 260	273,615,080.00

	AVERAGES	
Bank & Fin Svc	436 85	UP 5.48
Comm'l & Ind'l	2,157.00	UP 6.72
PRO	568.53	UP 2.79
Mining	1,589.00	DOWN 9.37
OIL	1.26	UP 0.05
SME	100.00	UNCH 0.00
All Shares Index	861.49	UP 9.99
Composite	1,427.40	UP 6.37

NO. OF ADVANCES: 38; NO. OF DECLINES: 16; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 41; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 95;
NO. OF TRADES: 1,328

CURRENCIES

December 24, 2003 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.806517	1.000000	55.464000
Japan	Yen	0.007502	0.009302	0.515900
United Kingdom	Pound	1.422534	1.763800	97.827400
Hongkong	Dollar	0.103892	0.128816	7.144700
Switzerland	Franc	0.641263	0.795102	44.099500
Canada	Dollar	0.606221	0.751654	41.689700
Singapore	Dollar	0.472006	0.585240	32.459800
Australia	Dollar	0.591808	0.733783	40.698500
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.139302	2.652520	147.119400
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.215054	0.266645	14.789200
Brunei	Dollar	0.470629	0.583533	32.365100
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000095	0.000118	0.006500
Thailand	Baht	0.020377	0.025265	1.401300
UAE	Dirham	0.219610	0.272294	15.102500
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.239900	68.769800
Argentina	Peso	0.272472	0.337838	18.737800
Brazil	Real	0.275826	0.341997	18.968500
Denmark	Kroner	0.134386	0.166625	9.241700
India	Rupee	0.017753	0.022012	1.220900
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.212270	0.263193	14.597700
Mexico	New Peso	0.071392	0.088519	4.909600
New Zealand	Dollar	0.517130	0.641190	35.563000
Norway	Kroner	0.119772	0.148505	8.236700
Pakistan	Rupee	0.014112	0.017498	0.970500
South Africa	Rand	0.116910	0.144957	8.039900
Korea	Won	0.000676	0.000838	0.046500
Sweden	Kroner	0.110052	0.136454	7.568300
Syria	Pound	0.018226	0.022599	1.253400
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.023756	0.029455	1.633700
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000506	0.000627	0.034800

Filipinos favor opening up of RP to global competition

By Doris C. Dumlao

FILIPINOS favor the opening up of the country to global competition and are less wary on possible risks to local traditions and culture, according to an online survey by international research firm AC Nielsen.

The survey, which covered 7,230 consumers with Internet access in 12 countries in the Asia-Pacific region in October, indicated that most Asians were positive toward the impact of globalization although there may be concerns about national independence and local culture.

"Optimism to globalization is higher in the Philippines and Filipinos are even less concerned about the threat to local traditions and culture," said Bienvenido Niles Jr., AC Nielsen managing director for Southeast Asia.

The other countries covered were Australia, India, Korea, Thailand, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong, Japan, New Zealand and Taiwan.

The survey showed that 90 percent of Asians agreed that globalization was giving more access to news, entertainment and information, while consent in the Philippines was even higher at 95 percent.

Some 86 percent of Asians believed that globalization was giving access to the same quality of products available to anyone else in the world, while approval rating was likewise even much higher among Filipino respondents at 94 percent.

The percentage of Filipinos who agreed that globalization was creating more job and career opportunities stood at 84 percent, higher than the regional average of 77 percent.

Most Filipino respondents also agreed that globalization was making the country more vulnerable to trends and events elsewhere in the world that can have a positive or negative impact on our local economy. The proportion was still higher at 92 percent compared to the regional average of 88 percent.

The respondents also agreed that globalization was:

- changing values and making life too fast and impersonal (66 percent among Filipinos compared to the regional average of 64 percent), and
- breaking down and teaching understanding and tolerance of other cultures and societies.

However, 72 percent of Asians believed that globalization could threaten local traditions and culture. The percentage of Filipinos who had similar beliefs was much lower at 61 percent.

"This openness to globalization may be due to the government's dissemination of information on its benefits," Niles said.

Concessions to Arab airlines worry PAL

By Abigail L. Ho

WHILE flag carrier Philippines Airlines Inc. is studying the possibility of flying to European countries, it has expressed concern over how the government was granting more air traffic rights to Arab airlines positioning themselves to dominate the European market.

PAL president and chief operating officer Avelino Zapanta said in an interview that the airline was "still studying" the possibility as well as the viability of mounting flights to European countries, but possible concessions that the government might give to its most formidable competitors remained a big consideration.

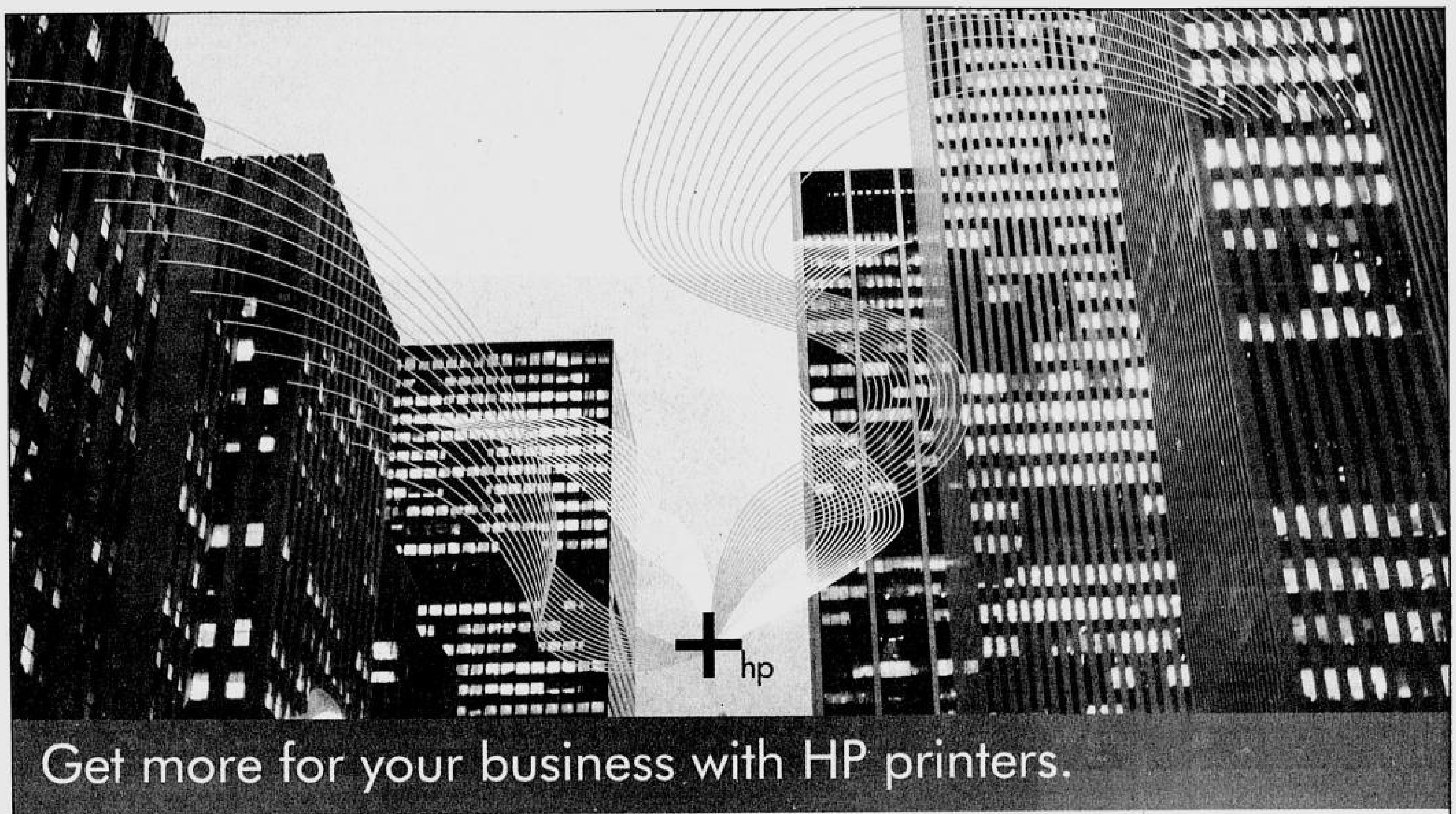
"We're still pencil-pushing, but it's now more serious than before. We're still studying it. We also have to renegotiate air service agreements with European countries. But the problem here is that the market is now being raided by Arab airlines. Our government has the tendency to give more traffic rights to them," he told reporters.

He lamented that local policy-makers, particularly those negotiating with other countries for air traffic rights, usually gave in to the demands of their foreign counterparts for fear of losing certain non-aviation-related rights and privileges.

In the case of Arab airlines, he said Philippine air panel members were quite willing to give more concessions to them because of the wealth of jobs that Arab nations offered Filipinos.

"Our decision-makers probably have an appreciation of the reality that Arab airlines are positioning themselves for the European market, but we still give traffic rights to them because we're afraid that they won't give jobs to Filipinos and they'll withdraw their investments. Foreign policy is then based on fear. We lose our integrity as a nation," he said.

Arab airlines continue to be the world's most profitable, posting a growth of 20.6 percent year-on-year in terms of passenger volume, according to October statistics from the International Air Transport Association.



Whatever business you're in, there's always a need to be more cost-effective and competitive for today's demanding customers. The HP business printers offer high-quality, network-capable imaging and printing devices, services and support. All of them easy to acquire, use and manage. Create that winning edge by developing powerful, professional, and effective marketing communication materials. And just to give you that added value, from Nov. 12, 2003 to Jan. 31, 2004, buy participating HP business printers and receive a free holiday gift. Enhance your business productivity, visit your HP printer resellers today.

HP LASERJET 1150
personal mono laser printer
PhP18,799
Up to 18/17 ppm (letter/A4)
8MB
250-sheet input tray
Up to 10,000 pages monthly duty cycle
Free computer table

HP LASERJET 3300mfp
printer/copier/flatbed scanner
PhP31,899
Up to 15/14 ppm (letter/A4)
32MB (96MB max)
250-sheet input tray
Up to 10,000 pages monthly duty cycle
Free computer table

HP LASERJET 4300
workgroup mono laser printer
PhP74,799
Up to 45/43 ppm (letter/A4)
64MB (416MB max)
600-sheet input tray
Up to 200,000 pages monthly duty cycle
Free executive chair

HP LASERJET 1300
personal mono printer
PhP21,999
Up to 20/19 ppm (letter/A4)
16MB (80MB max)
250-sheet input tray
Up to 10,000 pages monthly duty cycle
Free computer table

HP BUSINESS INKJET 1100d
versatile workgroup inkjet printer
PhP12,499
Up to 23/20 ppm (black/colour)
8MB (12MB max)
150-sheet input tray
Up to 6,250 pages monthly duty cycle
4 individual ink cartridges
Standard automatic two-sided printing module
Free computer table

HP DESKJET 9600
A3 photo inkjet printer
PhP24,399
Up to 20/15 ppm (black/colour)
16MB
150-sheet input tray
Up to 5,000 pages monthly duty cycle
Free computer table

HP COLOR LASERJET LJ1500L
entry-level colour laser printer
PhP46,899
Up to 16/4 ppm (black/colour)
16MB
125-sheet input tray
Up to 30,000 pages monthly duty cycle
Free computer table

HP COLOR LASERJET LJ2500L
entry-level colour laser printer
PhP58,499
Up to 16/4 ppm (black/colour)
64MB (256MB max)
125-sheet input tray
Up to 30,000 pages monthly duty cycle
Free computer table

HP COLOR LASERJET 4600
workgroup colour laser printer
PhP116,799
Up to 16 ppm (black/colour)
96MB (416MB max)
600-sheet input tray
Up to 85,000 pages monthly duty cycle
Free executive chair

Mechanics:

1. Buy any of the participating HP business printers from Nov. 12, 2003 to Jan. 31, 2004 and receive a premium item absolutely free.
2. To claim your gift, simply fax or email your Sales Invoice/Official Receipt together with your name, company, address, and contact numbers to Publicis-Dialog. They will contact you and make delivery arrangements.
3. Cut out the sticker from the box and submit it upon delivery of your free gift.
4. Other participating models with a free executive chair are: HP LaserJet 5100 series, HP LaserJet 8150 series, and HP LaserJet 5500 series.
5. To redeem your free gift, contact Violet Vallejo of Publicis-Dialog: [Tel] (632) 421-9998, [Fax] (632) 911-2586, or e-mail s.granada@publicis-dialog.com.ph

hp invent

For more information, contact HP at
(632) 867-3557, or Toll-free 1-800-1331-4488 or email ph.contact@hp.com

Metro Manila Dealers: ABC Computers 722-2654 • Accent Micro 634-2417 • Advance Solutions, Inc. 526-3935 • Asianic 781-8206 • Columbia Computer Superstore 633-9307 • Complink Marketing 920-9140 • C Link 893 9515 • Electroworld 747-7054 Fai Keu Computer systems 727-3771 First Data Corporation 893-8857 • Hytech Integrated Products 722-1122 • Integrated Computer Systems 727-3801 • Infoworx 897-5147 • Microphase Enterprise Co. 812-6814 • Nexus 759-6630 • NT Computer 927-2579 • PC Express 7260698 • Perfect Byte 723-1718 • Premium Logic 920 2112 • Prodata 414-4336 • Shellsoft Technology Corp. 740-0431 • Silicon Valley 371-6950 • StarApple 637-4295 • TCA - The computer Authority 810-5090 • Total Quality Machine 526-4503 • Unison 374-5888 • Villman Computer Systems 892-2222 • Yuivo Corp. 241-4601 • Zonshin Systems Corp. 365-0536 Provincial Dealers: CBX Corporation Cebu (032) 232-4314 • Columbia Computer Superstore Cebu (032) 231-7354 • Computer World Marketing Davao (082) 222-4059 • Electroworld Cebu (032) 346-2787 • Dataworld Computer Center CDO (088) 857-5484 • Digital Interface Davao (082) 221-1256 • Intellsoft Microcomputer Systems CDO (088) 857-1364 • Lenton Marketing Cebu (032) 254-6256 • MDR Microware Sales Cebu (032) 255-4415 • Silicon Valley Cebu (032) 234-0219 • Thinking Tools Cebu (032) 234-1788

©2003 Hewlett-Packard Development Company, L.P. All rights reserved.

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 3329, Series of 2003

WE DELIVER!

Hungry for news that would feed your mind?
The Philippine Daily Inquirer delivers
straight to your doorstep. Subscribe
to the country's #1 newspaper now!

Call: 528-0183 / 528-0186

Fax reply coupon to: 528-02-34 or mail to:

Philippine Daily Inquirer
c/o Circulation Division
Ground Floor, Trinity Building
636 T.M. Kalaw St., Ermita, Manila

I'd like to subscribe to the Philippine Daily Inquirer.
Please have my copy delivered to:

Name ____________________
Address ____________________
____________________ Tel. No. __________
Signature ____________________

TO GO DOWN IN FIRST QUARTER

BSP sees banks' bad loan levels rising by yearend

By Clarissa S. Batino

BANKS' bad loan levels were expected to have deteriorated the last two months of the year but are expected to improve in the first quarter of 2004.

A forecast made by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas showed the bad loans ratio would improve to the 14-percent level in the first quarter but only after deteriorating temporarily to as much as 16 percent of total loans in the last two months of the year.

Non-performing loans of the country's more than 40 commercial lenders rose to 15.16 percent of total loans in October from 14.49 percent the previous month ago. The increase came as the level of soured loans swelled while credit slowed down as businesses held back expansion plans in light of political uncertainties.

In October, total loans contracted by 3 percent to P1,668 trillion while bad loans went up by 1.5 percent to P253 billion.

A BSP source said the bad loans ratio in November was seen to go up between 15.5 and 16 percent as the level of NPLs was expected to rise while lending would have remained anemic.

Growth in lending slowed down to 0.8 percent in October from close to four percent in previous months.

Bad loans or NPLs are accounts whose principal or interests are unpaid for 90 straight days.

But window-dressing among banks toward the end of the year would firm up the ratio to 15 percent by December, according to a BSP official.

By the first half of 2004, banks' loan quality would improve anew as lenders undertake a more aggressive strategy in restructuring bad loans, selling foreclosed assets or soured loans either by themselves or through an asset manager, said a BSP official.

Although banks' NPLs had declined from a peak of almost 19 percent almost two years ago, the central bank was still worried that lenders have not been taking full advantage of the Special Purpose Vehicle Act to reduce their bad loans and foreclosed assets.

The SPV law that provides tax incentives to NPL take-outs would expire after April 2005.

The BSP said some banks have been selling their assets individually. About P6.2 billion of these types of disposal had been approved by the Monetary Board.

In October 2002, NPLs stood at P266.84 billion, an amount that already reflected the removal of roughly P30-billion in accounts that were fully-written off, which the BSP allowed to be deducted from the bad loans portfolio starting September 2002. The ratio back then was at 16.36 percent.

The BSP said banks have also been aggressively restructuring bad loans. Restructured loans worth P134 billion were taken out of the NPL folder.

The level of real and other properties owned or acquired or Ropoa stood at P193.9 billion as of October, up 0.4 percent from the previous month.

As a result, banks' non-performing assets or the combination of NPLs and Ropoa or seized assets stood at P446.9 billion, up one percent from P442.4 billion in September. The NPA ratio against total assets in October was higher at 13.42 percent from 13.25 percent.

Banks' NPL ratio peaked to 18.81 percent in October 2001 from a single-digit level before the 1997 Asian crisis. Since that time, banks have to contend with a growing portfolio of soured accounts.

Loan quality of banks worsened in year 2000 when NPLs started hitting 15 percent and dropping to 16.26 percent later that year. Bad loans further deteriorated to 18 percent starting August 2001 although it had started to decline in June 2002.

The central bank is hopeful that multilateral agencies like the Asian Development Bank and the International Finance Corp. would help facilitate the sale of the banking sector's non-performing assets.

The ADB and the IFC are talking with asset management companies as well as banks to bridge the pricing gap that had dogged the sale of NPLs and seized assets.

The going rate for the special purpose vehicles is to ask banks to sell the bad loans and assets at a 70 to 80 percent discount. Banks, on the other hand, avoid taking losses and so have been trying to sell the NPLs at a rate inversely proportional to the offer of asset managers.

Neda's yearend briefing

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

LAST week, I attended the year-end briefing of the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda). I usually do not go to government briefings, but I seldom can turn down a free meal.

The invitation was for 11 a.m. and I was there about five minutes past. Of course, the briefing did not start on time, which is the main reason why I do not usually go to government briefings. Luckily, I found myself chatting with Nicole Cacho of the Agencia EFE, the Spanish news agency. I had a great time exchanging notes with her on Spanish cuisine. I promised to try her recipes at her Mama's restaurant in Jupiter Street, Makati.

In time, a platoon of Neda executives sashayed in. At about twelve, the buffet lunch started. I had soup, pasta, fish, beef and dessert. The food was fair but filling.

After lunch, Neda Secretary Romulo Neri opened the briefing. With the help of PowerPoint, he rattled off data on the performance of the economy in 2003 and the prospects for 2004.

Although I love mathematics, I find data presented by economists totally boring. I was told that there would be the usual handout and I decided to wait for that. And since it was getting close to my siesta hour, I had a hard time staying awake.

The handout was full of alphabet soup: GDP, GNP, NFIA, AFF, WEO and OFW. I had to dig to find out what some of these stood for. There were also rafts of graphs. I wish these graphs could be prepared as to be understood by non-economists like me without having to ask some economist to explain them to me.

One data I did easily understand was the drop in beverage manufacturing. When I had a chance to speak, I said the drop could be directly blamed on my doctor who has restricted me to two bottles of beer a day.

The comparative graph on Asian GDP showed that, as of the third quarter of 2003, the Philippines grew by 4.4 percent. We did better than Taiwan, Hong Kong, Indonesia, South Korea and Singapore, but not as well as China, Thailand and Malaysia. The Insurance Commission used to compare premium growth rates of the Philippines with those of the rest of the Asean countries. This was stopped years ago because there was little basis for comparison. One does not compare a cargo truck, a freight train and a passenger jeepney.

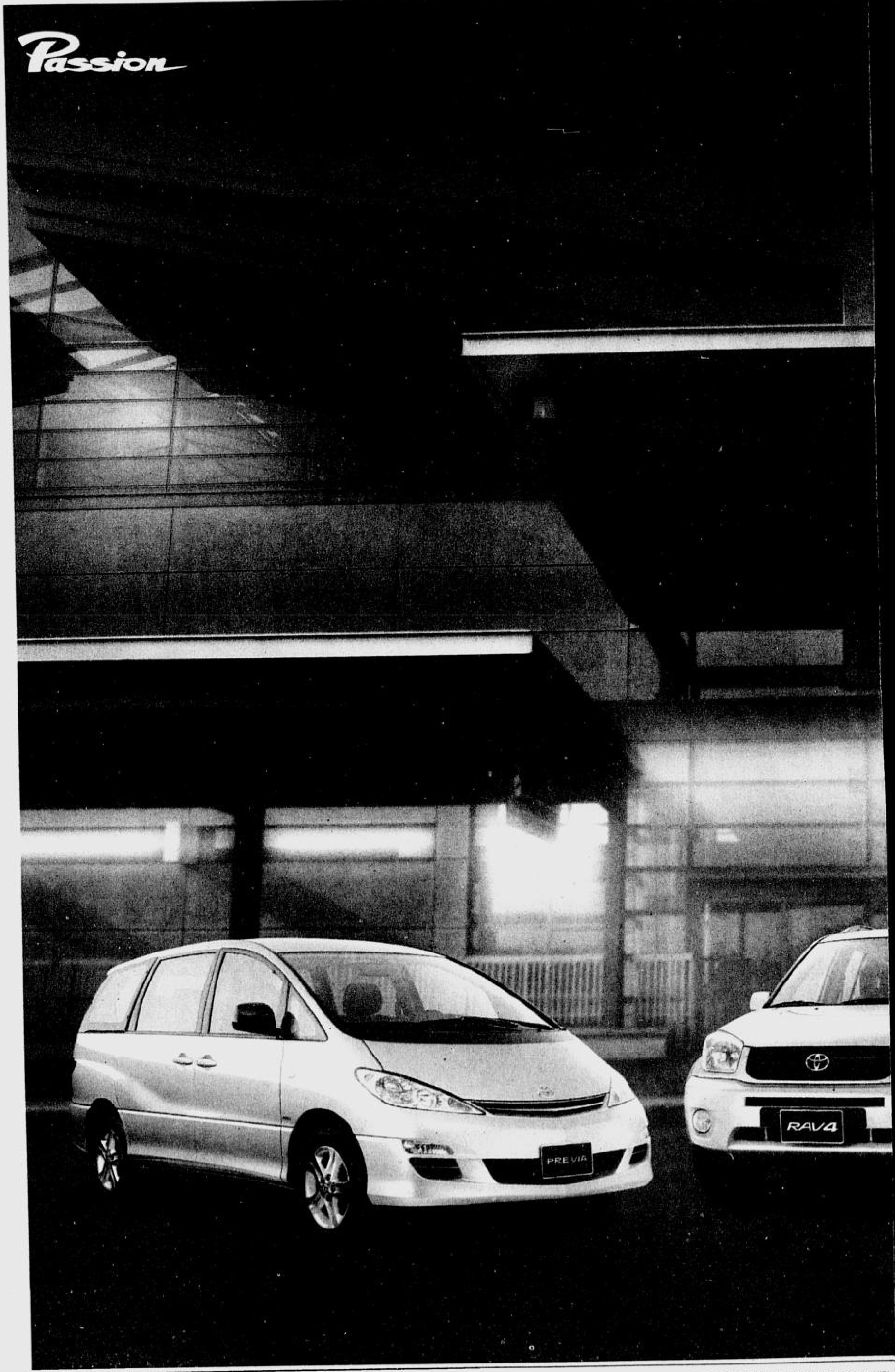
The handout included a write-up on booty capitalism. A Yale University scholar has written that booty capitalism exists when the state is "dominated by powerful business groups, which finance electoral exercises and use politicians and the machinery of government to further their economic interests." This sounds like the US. Remember the movie "Born Yesterday?" Broderick Crawford was the loathsome businessman who had a Senator in his pocket. Why do you think President Bush slapped a protective tariff on steel imported from Europe if he was not pressured by the steel industry? Do you think none of the US Senators, congressmen, governors are beholden to some business groups?

Why are there laws now on campaign finance and political contributions?

Booty capitalism is a kind of political lobbying. Washington is crawling with lobbyists, who are duly registered and licensed to practice their craft.

I am not trying to justify booty capitalism. But to make it appear that the phenomenon exists only in countries like the Philippines is not right.

Anyway, I had a good time at the Neda briefing. One of my New Year resolutions is to go to more government briefings, free lunch or none.



TOYOTA ALABANG, INC. Alabang-Zapote Rd cor. Concha Cruz Drive 800-0801 to 32 / 802-1991 TOYOTA BACOLOD CITY, Gardenville Subdivision, Araneta St., Bacolod City (0 34) 444-1811 to 13 TOYOTA BAGUIO CITY
364-1547 to 50 / 364-4071 to 75 TOYOTA BALINTAWAK-NORTH, 1010 Epifanio De Los Santos Ave (EDSA), Quezon City 927-7215 / 17 / 30 / 39 / 927-7242 / 44 / 48 / 52 / 927-7257 / 62 / 65 / 927-7266
Km. 118 Maharlika Highway, Daang Sarile, Cabanatuan City (044) 463-8481 to 87 TOYOTA CAGAYAN DE ORO, INC., Km. 3 National Highway, Kauswagan, Cagayan de Oro City (08822) 735-770 / 791 / 846 / (088)
Quezon City 952-1021 to 27 TOYOTA CUBAO, INC., 926 Aurora Blvd., Cubao, Quezon City 911-0651 to 63 TOYOTA DAGUPAN CITY, INC., Diversion Road, Barangay San Miguel Calasiao, Pangasinan (075) 517-2026 to 2
(082) 234-0998 / (082) 234-2994 / (082) 234-8640 TOYOTA ILOILO CITY, INC., Gran Plains Subd., Jaro, Iloilo City (033) 320-6115 to 19 TOYOTA MANILA BAY CORP., Roxas Boulevard cor. EDSA Extension, Pasay City 832-340
Quezon St., Paco, Manila 564-1811 to 20 TOYOTA PASONG TAMO, INC., 2292 Pasong Tamo Extension, Makati City 893-8084 TOYOTA QUEZON AVENUE, INC., 728 Quezon Avenue, Quezon City 712-5001 to 06 TOYOTA SHAW, INC.

Flat growth for garments exports expected this year

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GARMENTS industry, the country's second-largest dollar earner, is expected to post zero growth this year largely due to the slowdown of orders from the United States.

According to Garments and Textile Export Board (GTEB) executive director Serafin Juliano, the industry is projected to generate $2.8 billion in export revenue for 2003, or the same as last year's level.

Juliano described the decline in garment exports to the United States as "artificial," saying the slowdown did not say much about the local industry's level of competitiveness but had more to do with the lower quota granted by Washington to Manila.

"By 2005, the quota will be lifted, so by then we will be able to see how the market will behave," said Juliano, adding the quota-free regime that would begin in 2005 might benefit the local garments industry because it would result in limitless access to foreign markets.

The quota-free regime beginning 2005 means quantity restrictions currently imposed in the biggest buyers of garments—the United States, the European Union and Canada—will be removed, paving the way for a free-for-all global market.

Juliano said the decline in garments shipment to the United States, which is the largest foreign market for the Philippines, might be about one to 2 percent. He said the full-year decline in orders from the United States would be brought by sluggish sales in the first three quarters of the year.

In the January-to-September period, shipments to the United States stood at $1.59 billion, or slightly higher than the $1.58 billion posted during the same period in 2002.

Juliano said the expected growth in orders from non-quota countries and the European Union might only be enough to offset the decline in orders from the United States, and not to result in overall growth.

In 2002, orders from the United States accounted for about 75 percent of the country's total garments export revenue.

Garments shipment to the European Union generated $264 million in the first nine months of the year, or higher than the $243 million recorded in the same period in 2002.

Common economic agenda

No Free Lunch

Cielito F Habito

AS THE PRESIDENTIAL candidates unveil their respective economic platforms in the coming weeks, we are likely to see more similarities than differences among them. After all, anyone can see what our country's most pressing economic problems are. Besides, we can expect every serious candidate to obtain economic advice from largely the same small pool of highly trained professional economists in the country (unlike lawyers, there really aren't all that many of us, believe it or not!). No serious candidate can afford to shun the advice of formally trained economists in favor of armchair economic analysts with unorthodox ideas, and pseudo-economists long in ideological rhetoric but short in theory (of these, we do not have a shortage!). Doing so would only court a negative backlash from the investment community and jeopardize our economic stability—as some recently elected Latin American leaders with initially left-leaning tendencies quickly learned.

Jobs, prices and income

The ordinary citizen cares little about economic programs based on the usual numbers on GNP/GDP, fiscal deficits, balance of payments and other quantitative economic indicators. To gain votes, each candidate must be able to address the three main economic indicators that hit every Filipino directly, especially the *masa* and the youth who will determine the coming election's outcomes. These are jobs, prices and income.

Our current track record on these is mixed, but the incumbent President can take credit for the fact that under her watch, we are doing reasonably well on two out of the three, at least based on the official economic data. With the inflation rate averaging only around 3 percent for the last two years, the country had not seen better price stability in at least the past 13 years. Growth in overall output and income as measured by GNP/GDP has also been quite respectable, although there is need to broaden the base of such growth.

But with more than one out of every 10 workers unable to find work, job creation remains the single biggest challenge in our economic management. This lack of jobs directly translates to persistently high rates of poverty. If it's any consolation, the problem is not unique to the Philippines. Even rich industrialized countries are having a similar problem with "jobless growth." For some time now, high rates of joblessness have also been plaguing the USA, Japan, and most of Europe.

Growth with jobs

It is therefore incumbent on each presidential candidate to spell out how she/he proposes to achieve broad-based economic growth that will translate into an expansion of domestic jobs and reduction of domestic poverty. On this, there is wide agreement on some key strategies that need to be undertaken.

For example, aside from the xenophobic ultra-nationalists among us, few will dispute that we need to attract more of those foreign investments pouring into our part of the world, but going mostly to Thailand, Malaysia, Vietnam and China. For as long as our domestic savings rate remains as low as it has traditionally been relative to our neighbors, much of the job-creating investments we need will have to be financed from foreign savings. There is no escaping this fundamental postulate in economics. Thus, every presidential candidate will try to convince us that her/his government will be able to overcome the persistent deterrents to foreign investments in our country: inferior infrastructure, high rates of criminality, graft and corruption, lack of predictability and finality in economic policies and contracts, and so on. No amount of fiscal incentives will attract enough investments in our economy unless these more fundamental issues are firmly and definitively addressed.

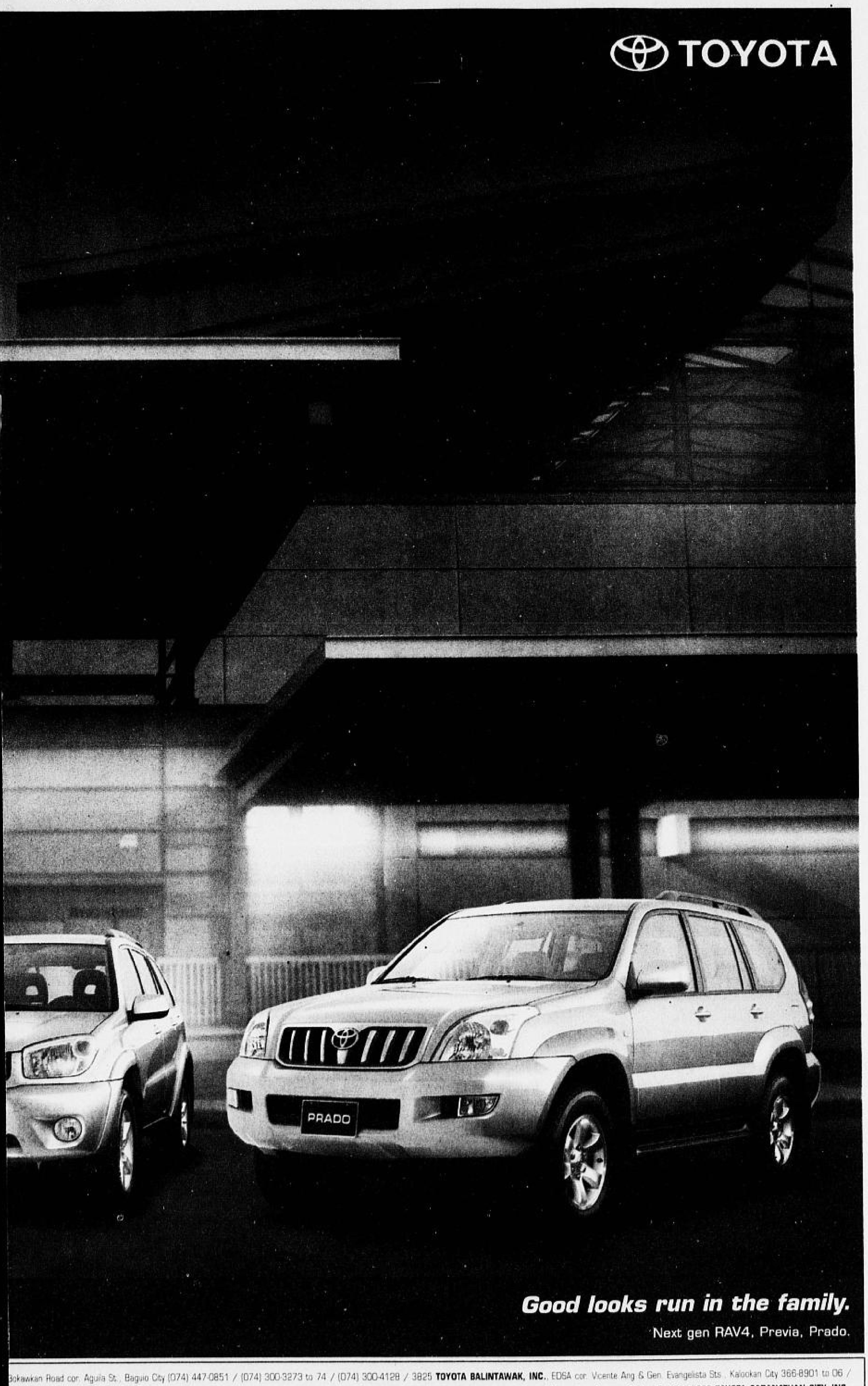
Another key element in pursuing a broad-based economic growth that must figure prominently in any presidential economic platform is the promotion and strengthening of small and medium enterprises (SMEs). For one thing, the capital needed to create one job in SMEs is significantly smaller than in large-scale enterprises. SMEs also permit a much broader distribution of economic activity, both geographically and sectorally. And with a strong program for rural SME development, rural savings can be mobilized right within the countryside, rather than have them siphoned off to the urban centers to finance mostly large enterprises. This way, more jobs can be generated in the countryside where unemployment, underemployment and poverty are more prevalent.

Other imperatives

Every candidate will emphasize the primacy of education in providing for our nation's longer-term economic future. Everybody knows that the number of schoolrooms, teachers and textbooks remain unable to catch up with the rapid growth in the number of school-age Filipino children year after year. There is also wide agreement on the need to upgrade the quality of education in the Philippines, which has severely fallen behind that of our neighbors as evidenced by comparative test scores and other objective indicators. The country's future will be shaped by how well our educational system shapes the next generation of our citizens and leaders, and the extreme urgency of addressing our current shortcomings in education should be clear to any aspiring leader of the land.

Like much else, the problem with education and all other essential public services traces to the weak finances of the Philippine government. All candidates will therefore indicate how they will ensure that government revenues can be substantially increased in order to arrest the decline in our tax and revenue effort ratios (i.e. ratio to GNP) since 1997. This will be one of the most urgent and challenging balancing acts the next President will have to demonstrate success in within her/his first year in office. Much of everything else will fall into place once that is accomplished.

Comments welcome at chabito@ateneo.edu



okawkan Road cor. Aguila St., Baguio City (074) 447-0851 / (074) 300-3273 to 74 / (074) 300-4128 / 3825 **TOYOTA BALINTAWAK, INC.**, EDSA cor. Vicente Ang & Gen. Evangelista Sts., Kalookan City 366-8901 to 06 /
/ 69 **TOYOTA BATANGAS CITY, INC.**, Diversion Road, Barangay Balagtas, Batangas City (043) 723-7386 **TOYOTA MAKATI INC.**, Ayala cor. Metropolitan Avenues, Makati City 897-3333 **TOYOTA CABANATUAN CITY, INC.**,
358-9994 (088) 858-7770 **TOYOTA CEBU CITY, INC.**, 34 M.J. Cuenco St., Cebu City (032) 253-1161 **TOYOTA CEBU-MANDAUE**, Tabok, Mandaue City (032) 345-8670 **TOYOTA COMMONWEALTH**, Commonwealth Ave.,
/ (075) 522-6771 / 6734 / 4773 **TOYOTA DASMARIÑAS CAVITE**, Salitran II, Aguinaldo Highway, Dasmariñas, Cavite (046) 850-2579 / (046) 529-8115 (trunk line) **TOYOTA DAVAO CITY, INC.**, Km. 6 Lanang, Davao City
to 10 / 832-3432 to 34 / 832-3384 / 832-3437 **TOYOTA MARIKINA SERVICE STATION**, Brgy. Sto. Niño, Sumulong Highway cor. Toyota Ave., Marikina City 682-9701 to 03 / 647-3604 to 07 **TOYOTA OTIS, INC.**, 1770 Paz M.
411 Shaw Blvd., Mandaluyong City 717-0707 to 08 / 717-0338 to 04 / 717-1146 / 717-0201 to 02 / 727-2387 / 631-1901 / 636-3328 **TOYOTA SHAW-ORTIGAS**, 124 E. Rodriquez Jr. Ave., Bo. Ugong, Pasig City 671-9854 to 64

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING DIVISION
Main Office: PASONG TAMO, MAKATI CITY
☎ 8972535 (Direct) ☎ 8978808 (Trunk) Fax 8974008
G/F ATRIUM BLDG., MAKATI AVENUE, MAKATI CITY
☎ 8114361 ☎ 8114370 ☎ 8114012 Fax 8925578
ST. ANTHONY'S BLDG., AURORA BLVD., QUEZON CITY
☎ 912-9008-11 Fax 912-9011
SM MEGAMALL, MANDALUYONG CITY
☎ 6350219 ☎ 6872354 ☎ 6872366 Fax 6350220
G/F TRINITY BLDG., 636 T.M. KALAW ST., ERMITA, MANILA
☎ 5273342 ☎ 5280183 ☎ 5276357 Fax 5280213
ALABANG, MUNTINLUPA CITY
☎ 8424503 ☎ 8506465 Fax 8506465
e-mail address: main_classifieds@inquirer.com.ph

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

NATIONAL CLASSIFIEDS

The Widest Reaching Classifieds

RATES

P245 per column centimeter

P75 per line

(All prices exclusive of E-VAT)

DEADLINES

for reservations / cancellations / corrections

Mondays to Saturdays	Sundays
12:00 noon	12:00 noon
Day before publication	every Thursday

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

MEDICAL

PHYSICAL THERAPY

P. THERAPY 09185192459 ED

.PHYSICIAN/SURGEON

RAPID Tx VD-STD
Ex. SWEAT PIMPLES KELOID
ALLERGY WARTS SKIN PEEL
15 Annapolis Greenhills
Call 7276124 - 25 9am-7pm

STD Clinic RAPID Treat
U MAY NOT FEEL N HAV IT
Call 8175071 2178 PTamo

PERSONAL

MASSAGE

02-3233269 Best Boys

ADAM'S APPLE 3605724

Akhin Thai Masg BAGUIO&MLA (02)8347357 CBU (032)2532597

Ask Rally MALE MASSEUR 4728095

'Mr BODY PHYSIQUE MASSAGE 11A Kamias QC 4350978

•ASIAN GUYS 09204540607

H'SOME ATHLETES 8337361

JAMES MALE 24HRS SERVICE 8518650 ; 0920-6274243

MALE 16 PALANAN 7320659

MALE 24H/HME & HTL 7412767

MALE MASSEURS 8525521

MSSGE M/F 09185059399 JAKE

REFLEXOLOGY

Edward 7289285 09195367404

FEELS GOOD 4127758

JOJO HHMS M/F 0920-8635511

MALE SPA 7314018

Wizard Massage 4213197/4227303

TUTORIAL LESSONS

LIGHT 5301315 / 5268216

HOUSEHOLD

HOUSEHOLD JOBS

GOOD CARING MAIDS 535-93-17 • 0927-445-5815

Good Maid Yaya Boy 4214652

Help Agency 532-1947 • 532-8376

MAID COOK YAYA 8957507

PROV'L MAID 1ST TIME MLA FROM DAVAO / CDO 7328405

ANGEL'S HANDS w/ NBI&BI 4213253 / 4213874

LIPAT BAHAY

•731-6833•LIPAT

L-BAHAY 9206784 4540520

•CHEAP LBAHAY 9260424•

LBAHAY 7113540

L-BAHAY 712-16-92

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

COMM'L/RES'L

MANDALUYONG

4 DOOR APT. MAND. 7M NEG. CALL JOEL 570-4677

HOUSE & LOT

LAS PIÑAS

950T 2BR 2STY 8054686

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

HOUSE & LOT

MUNTINLUPA

Alabang Hills 574sqm 7764856 09274726181

PARANAQUE

Hse & Lot BF Pque 7764856

PASIG

Kapitolyo 6br 637-7396

MERCEDES H/L
3BR, 2TB, 2Storey P18M -thru Pag-ibig / Bank Loan
Call 643-8927 • 0917-3312287

PASIG GREENLAND VILLAGE two-storey residential bldg plus huge attic 3BR 7T&B den spacious living area dining kitchen extended dirty kitchen lanai maids&driver's quarters 2 car garage P9.5M •CALL 6439221•

QUEZON CITY

5br 3tb Xav 3 Loy Hgts 0917-4815314 • 426-0543

New St. Ignatius Vill. P11M 4rm 4tb 2car T647-3070

BAGUIO

BUNG. 2BR 2TB 2M 9122304

CONDO/TWNHSE

MAKATI

1.6M C5 Nr The Fort
12T/mo. or 3Yrs No Int. or 10% D.P. LIPAT AGAD 2-4BR 15min Fr Mkti 0917-8313226

Kensington Parkplace In Fort Bonifacio 0917-5213838

Rufino Towers Ayala P9M 212m² 3prkng best buy!!! 7001393 / 09178387820

MKT NR AYALA
BnewTwnhse/3stry/3br/2tb/grge P3.435M 8903461 loc 34

MANILA

930T nr UST 0920-8309744

ESPANA TOWER nr UST 0917-8102903

NR LA SALLE
BnewTwnhse/3stry/3br/3tb/grge P3.295M 8903461 loc 34

PASIG

Condo™wnhse Ortigas DBO 6342121 0917-5213838

Malayan Plaza ADB Ave. Nr Podium Cell 0917-5213838

ORTIGAS 1BR 520-0075

VALLE VERDE 2 CONDO 3BR PKG. TXT 0917-8991581

QUEZON CITY

Rushl Fernandina 88 100sqm 4.5M Neg 3br 2tb 0916-7069277

THSE-QC 3BR
FA 115 2TB PKG. FF 912-2304

The
TOWER
at Emerald Square
READY FOR OCCUPANCY!
EMERALD TWR
COR TUAZON &
J.P. RIZAL ST.
PROJ. 4, QUEZON CITY
NEAR U.P. • ATENEO
MIRIAM COLLEGE
OFF./RES'L. CONDO
SALE OR LEASE TO OWN
P1.4M - UP EASY TERMS
ONLY 100T TO MOVE IN
437-1549 • 421-3105

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

CONDO/TWNHSE

QUEZON CITY

One BEATRIZ Tower
1st Class COMM'L-OFFICE RES'L CONDO.
AURORA / LAUAN ST., PROJ. 3, Q.C.
READY FOR OCCUPANCY
FOR SALE OR LEASE
Nr. ATENEO • UP • MIRIAM • KOSTKA • PSBA • NCBA
1ST CLASS AMENITIES
R-Top S.Pool, Gym, Sauna, Etc.
W/ X'LENT VIEW 360°
MOVE-IN @ 10% DP
TO SEE... IS TO BELIEVE
OPEN until 8 p.m. daily
ROOMS ALSO AVAILABLE FOR RENT (DAILY/WEEKLY/MONTHLY) CALL
MASTER C RE-DE, INC.
TEL# 913-5223/921-4883
922-4464/913-7632

LOT

LAS PIÑAS

TALON 204m²@P4,000 639-1694 / 0917-8102903

PASIG

VICTORIA PLACE SUBD. No DP. No Interest, Big Disc. T628-2584 • 0919-7927249

QUEZON CITY

LOYOLA GRAND VILLAS choice lots w/ view 426-5650•929-1832

CAVITE

Dasmarinas Cavite Gov Drv 5.2H 7001393 / 09178387820

LAGUNA

S. POINT CABUYAO 9122304

MEMORIAL LOT

FAM ESTATE 16LOT 9122304

Loyola Marikina 8 Lawn Lots 0917-4815314 • 426-0543

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

HOUSE

MAKATI

3br w/Grge P20T 589-9505

QUEZON CITY

Blue Ridge 18T T647-3070 3Rms 3tb 1Car Kit Liv.

BAGUIO

2BR 2TB 1800/DY 9122304

CONDO/TWNHSE

MANDALUYONG

PARAGON PLAZA FF 9122304

BUSINESS RENTAL

AYALA AVE T8181696/7586

PTAMO nr BUENDIA 1st Class bldg 85/129/148/185m 8903461 loc 34 or 19 ofc hrs

LOAN & MORTGAGE

2% W/O TAKING CAR 3677523/24

BUSN DRS OFW 524-3197

TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

CARS FOR RENT

A B C CARS/VANS
NEW MODELS W/ OR W/O DRIVER
MLA HO 536-8822 • 303-789
Q.C. BR 426-2278 • 426-4084

Bnew Vans 8254058 8261045

CARS/ VANS/ BRIDAL/ 8969956

TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

CARS FOR RENT

★Vans Coaster Bus 422-9296

Cheap Van Rental 9330311

L300/ADV. 741-1356

VONDOR
Hiace L300 Cars 8234623

CAR LOAN

1.5% Fast Car Loan 3677523/24

1.5% CARLOAN 373-6519

1.5% CARLOAN 788-0357

1.5% CARLOAN 952-2510

1.5% Easy Carloan 7815352/55

1.5% Fast Car Loan 6560140

1.5% w/o Taking Car 6567685

1.5% w/oTaking Car 3732681-82

1.5% w/oTaking Car 3650974/75

2% w/o Taking Car 7262780

2% w/oTaking Car 8959454

2% w/oTaking Car 8966630/33

2% w/oTaking Car 3731021

2% w/oTaking Car 8870490/95

2% w/oTaking Car 7228942-43

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

YAMAHA GRAND & UPRIGHT
ELITE PIANO CENTER
Almost New:TERMS-7213124

ACCOUNTANT

- Female, single, not more than 30 yrs of age
- Graduate of B.S. Accounting, experience is an advantage but not required

MANAGEMENT TRAINEE

- Female, single, not more than 26 years of age
- Graduate of any 4-year course, Computer literate
- With or w/o experience in accounting related works

Applicants must have the knowledge of Chinese Languages and may send thru:

P.O. Box 1854 Q.C.

Notice is hereby given that the property of 2,292 Has. agri/residential lots at Tanawan, Pantabangan, Nueva Ecija is being offered for sale by:

1. Cambitala Primary Multi-Purpose Kilusang Bayan, Inc., CLOA-0-1290 to 1291;
2. East Poblacion Primary Multi-Purpose Kilusang Bayan, Inc., CLOA-0-1297 to 1298;
3. Buklod ng Pagmumuling-Gubat sa Mataas na Bundok, Inc., CLOA-0-1299 to 1301;
4. Samahang Magsasaka ng Pantabangan Foundation sa Nueva Ecija, CLOA-0-1204.

MARIDOL CUMPIO
719-1844/0919-5860305

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

PETS

DOG TRAINER 4528681

PASIG

Lego Slide 4Th 620-4582

WANTED TO BUY

BUY • SELL • PAWN
ROLEX+OTHERS
DIAMONDS/JEWELRY
Repair / Polish Any watch
MANILA WATCH EXCHANGE
Hyatt • 804-0484 / 834-2886
Greenhills • 724-4374

BUYING ROLEX
Other WATCHES, BEST PRICE
0917-8142309 • 7269687
7220433 • 4123543

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

FEMALE

Atractive Energetic & Educated Lady 18 - 28 For Travel Companion to a 10 Yr Old Foreigner Girl 0920-8333975

MEDTECH/MIDWIFE-S. PREF. NEAR CAINTA • T682-2941

PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

This gives notice that the estate of the late Alicia Esperanza Cuesta Delos Santos of Poblacion, Pulilan, Bulacan who died intestate on 8 March 1999 was extrajudicially settled among her heirs through an Extrajudicial Settlement of Estate acknowledged on 5 December 2003 before Notary Public for and in Makati City Rachel Angela Anosan and entered in her Notarial Register as Doc.No.92 Page No.19 Book No. III Series of 2003. (PDI-Dec.15,22&29,2003)

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

Security Agency T637-7396

Earn Fr. Home 0918-9420518

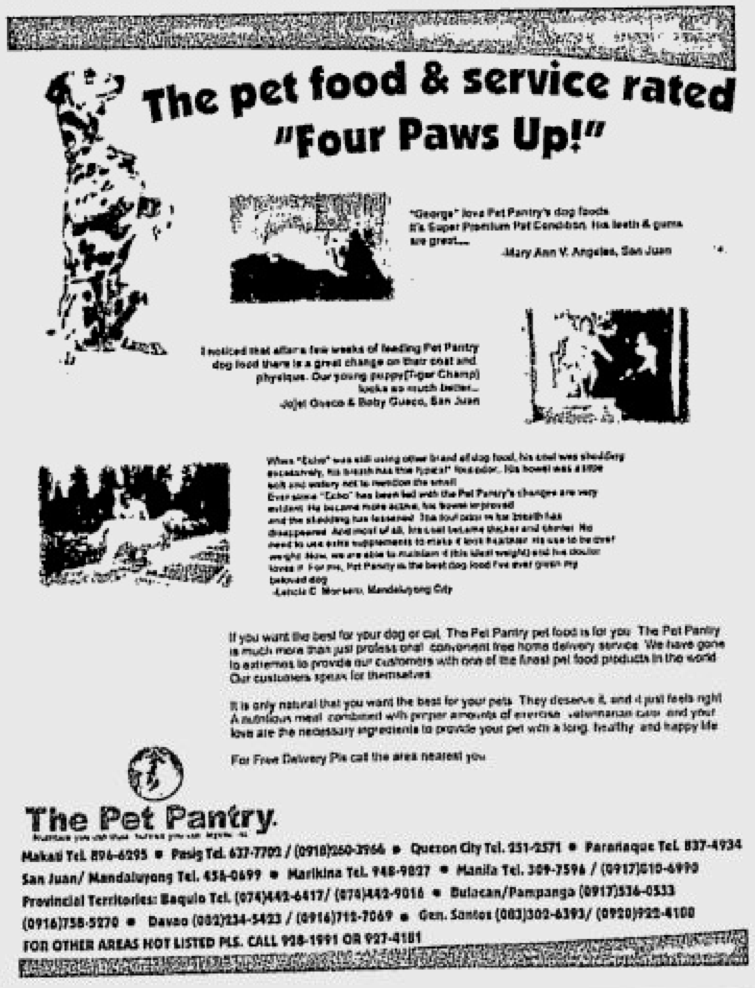
RETIRE 2YRS 09189051567

RTW Wholesaler 3738821

Smart E-Load Ez way 254-8708

DIRECT SALE

Sideline . JEWELRY CONSIGN Orientation M-S 8-8 ; 4531478



The pet food & service rated "Four Paws Up!"

"George" love Pet Pantry's dog foods. It's Super Premium Pet Condition. His teeth & gums are great...
-Mary Ann V. Angeles, San Juan

I noticed that after a few weeks of feeding Pet Pantry dog food there is a great change on their coat and physique. Our young puppy(Tiger Champ) looks so much better...
-Jojet Gueco & Baby Gueco, San Juan

If you want the best for your dog or cat, The Pet Pantry pet food is for you. The Pet Pantry is much more than just professional convenient free home delivery service. We have gone to extremes to provide our customers with one of the finest pet food products in the world. Our customers speak for themselves.

It is only natural that you want the best for your pets. They deserve it, and it just feels right. A nutritious meal combined with proper amounts of exercise, veterinarian care and your love are the necessary ingredients to provide your pet with a long, healthy and happy life.

For Free Delivery Pls call the area nearest you.

The Pet Pantry.

Makati Tel. 896-6295 • Pasig Tel. 637-7703 / (0918)260-3966 • Quezon City Tel. 251-2571 • Parañaque Tel. 837-4934
San Juan/ Mandaluyong Tel. 456-0699 • Marikina Tel. 948-9027 • Manila Tel. 309-7596 / (0917)810-6990
Provincial Territories: Baguio Tel. (074)442-6417/ (074)442-9016 • Bulacan/Pampanga (0917)536-0533
(0916)758-5270 • Davao (082)234-5423 / (0916)712-7069 • Gen. Santos (083)302-6393/ (0920)922-4100
FOR OTHER AREAS NOT LISTED PLS. CALL 928-1991 OR 927-4181

POEA

24-HR HOTLINES

722-1144 • 722-1155

From the nation's No. 1 Newspaper: INQUIRER

JOBMarket ONLINE

VISIT US AT

www.jobmarketonline.com

NATIONAL NUTRITION COUNCIL

Announcement of Vacant Positions

NUTRITION OFFICER V (NPPD-CO) – SG-24; Item No. NNCB-NUTO5-1-1998; Masteral degree; 4 years in position/s involving management and supervision; 24 hours training in management and supervision; 2nd level eligibility.

NUTRITION OFFICER IV (NSD-CO) – SG-22; Item No. NNCB-NUTO4-4-1998; Bachelor's degree relevant to job; 3 years relevant experience; 16 hours relevant training; 2nd level eligibility.

NUTRITION OFFICER III (NPPD-CO, NSD-CO, REGION V [LEGASPI CITY], REGION VI [ILOILO CITY] & REGION IX [ZAMBOANGA CITY] – SG-18; Item Nos. NNCB-NUTO3-1-1998, NNCB-NUT03-14-1998, NNCB-NUT03-1998, NNCB-NUTO3-4-1998 & NNCB-NUTO3-7-1998; Bachelor's degree relevant to job; 2 years relevant experience; 8 hours relevant training; 2nd level eligibility.

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT II (OED-CO) – SG-17; Item No. NNCB-EXA2-1-1998; Bachelor's degree relevant to job; 1 year relevant experience; 4 hours relevant training; 2nd level eligibility.

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER II (AD-CO) – SG-15; Item No. NNCB-ADO2-1-1998; Bachelor's degree; 1 year experience; 4 hours training; 2nd level eligibility.

NUTRITION OFFICER II (NPPD-CO & NSD-CO) – SG-14; Item No. NNCB-NUTO2-14-1998, NNCB-NUT02-3-1998 & NNCB-NUTO2-15-1998, Bachelor's degree relevant to job; 1 year relevant experience; 4 hours relevant training; 2nd level eligibility.

CASHIER III (AD-CO) – SG-18; Item No. NNCB-CASH3-1-1998; Bachelor's degree relevant to job; 2 year relevant experience; 8 hours relevant training; 2nd level eligibility

CASHIER I (AD-CO) – SG-10; Item No. NNCB-CASH1-1-1998; Bachelor's degree; no experience required; no training required; 2nd level eligibility.

ARTIST ILLUSTRATOR II (CO-NIED) – SG-8; Item No. NNCB-A12-1-1998; Completion of 2 years college studies or High School Graduate with relevant vocational/trade course; 1 year relevant experience; 4 hours relevant training; 1st level eligibility/Draftsman or Illustrator (MC11, s. 1996 – Cat. 1).

ACCOUNTING CLERK II (FD-CO) – SG-6; Item No. NNCB-AC2-1-1998; Completion of 2 years studies in college; no experience required; no training required; 1st level eligibility.

DATA CONTROLLER I (FD-CO) – SG-6; Item No. NNCB-DCTL1-1-1998; Completion of 2 years studies in college; no experience required; no training required; 1st level eligibility.

CLERK II (AD-CO) – SG-4; Item No. NNCB-CK2-2-1998; Completion of 2 years studies in college; no experience required; no training required; 1st level eligibility.

DRIVER I (REGION 1 [SAN FERNANDO CITY, LA UNION] & REGION XI (DAVAO CITY]) – SG-3; Item Nos. NNCB-DRVI-14-1998 & NNCB-DRVI-7-1998; elementary school graduate; no experience required; no training required; professional driver's license.

For further information, please contact Mr. Benjamin C. Formento, Human Resource Management Officer III, Personnel Section, Administrative Division, tel. no. 892-85-75.

(Sgd.) **CAROLINA BAUTISTA-BATALLONES**
Deputy Executive Director

PSALM
POWER SECTOR
ASSETS & LIABILITIES
MANAGEMENT CORPORATION

2/F, SGVII Bldg. Ayala Avenue,
Makati City, Philippines
(632) 8938202

GUIDELINES/PROCEDURES FOR THE ISSUANCE OF CERTIFICATE OF REGISTRATION FOR SELF-GENERATION FACILITIES

Pursuant to Section 34 of Republic Act No. 9136, otherwise known as the "Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001" or "EPIRA" and Section 7 of Rule 18 of the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR), the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management (PSALM) Corporation hereby adopts the following Guidelines/Procedures for the Issuance of a Certificate of Registration to Self-Generation Facilities.

Section 1. **Objectives** – This set of Guidelines is prescribed to identify all Self-Generation Facilities in the country which are covered by the exemption from the imposition of Universal Charge (UC) for a period of four (4) years from February 2003 billing period.

Section 2. **Scope** – This Guidelines shall apply to all Self-Generation Facilities owned and constructed by an end-user for its own consumption or internal use excluding Generation Facilities for use by households, clinics, hospitals and other medical facilities.

Section 3. **Procedures** – All Self-Generation Facilities shall apply for the issuance of a Certificate of Registration with PSALM's Universal Levy Department. Provided all the requirements shall have been complied with, PSALM shall notify the Self-Generation Facilities of its action within sixty (60) working days from the date of application unless PSALM shall have required the submission of additional information.

Section 4. **Requirements** – The following documents/information are required to be submitted by all Self-Generation Facilities:

a) Company Profile;
b) Certified true copy of the Articles of Incorporation/Partnership (for Corporation/Partnership);
c) DTI Certificate of Registration (for Single Proprietorship);
d) Business Permit; and
e) General Plant Description.

Section 5. **Deferment** – Consistent with Rule 18, Section 7 of the IRR, all Self-Generation Facilities whether new, existing or under construction shall not be covered by the imposition of UC for a period of four (4) years from its imposition; Provided, That, such Self-Generation Facilities shall register with the ERC and PSALM within the 4-year period.

Section 6. **Ocular Inspection** – The PSALM, in coordination with ERC and TRANSCO, shall conduct ocular inspection of the facilities of self-generation entities to validate the documents submitted.

Section 7. **Separability** – If for any reason, any section of this Guidelines is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other parts or sections hereof which are not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

Section 8. **Effectivity** – This Guidelines shall take effect on the fifteenth (15th) day following its publication in a newspaper of general circulation.
Makati City, December 5, 2003

EDGARDO M. DEL FONSO
President

(PDI–Dec. 22 & 29, 2003)

Drop your resumés NOW!

Visit any of the Inquirer Classified Ads branch and drop your resumés in our new

Resumé Box

We gather your resumés and forward them to companies with employment needs.

JOB Market

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING DIVISION
Main Office: PASONG TAMO, MAKATI CITY
☎ 8972535 (Direct) ☎ 8978808 (Trunk) Fax 8974808
G/F ATRIUM BLDG., MAKATI AVENUE, MAKATI CITY
☎ 8114361 ☎ 8114370 ☎ 8114012 Fax 8925578
ST. ANTHONY'S BLDG., AURORA BLVD., QUEZON CITY
☎ 912-9008-11 Fax 912-9011
SM MEGAMALL, MANDALUYONG CITY
☎ 6350219 ☎ 6872354 ☎ 6872366 Fax 6350220
G/F TRINITY BLDG., 636 T.M. KALAW ST., ERMITA, MANILA
☎ 5273342 ☎ 5280183 ☎ 5276357 Fax 5280213
ALABANG, MUNTINLUPA CITY
☎ 8424503 ☎ 8506465 Fax 8506465
e-mail address: main_classifieds@inquirer.com.ph

OBITUARIES

RATE
P245 per column centimeter
(All prices exclusive of E-VAT)

DEADLINE
for reservations / cancellations / corrections
Monday to Sunday
12:00 noon
Day before publication

DELFIN R. MANZANO

Died peacefully on December 27, 2003 at the age of 70.

His wife **Purita** (†); children **Rainier, Rommel** (†) and **Regina Gloria**; grandchildren **Bjay, Totsie, Eboy, Doodle, Daisy, Perpetua Sharon, Niko, John Robert** and **Aaron**; great grandchildren, nephews, nieces and other relatives request the readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Lumbang Chapel, La Funeraria Paz-Sucat (inside Manila Memorial Park) Parañaque City.

Cremation will be on Wednesday, December 31, 2003, at the Manila Memorial Park Crematorium after the 10:00 a.m. Mass.

"For God so loved the World, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have Everlasting life."

—John 3:16

Our Dearly Beloved

PACITA ESCUDERO ALTONAGA-JAMORALIN

A loving wife, mother, grandmother and great grandmother,
Chief, Records Section of the Quezon Institute, Retired

Born on December 1, 1926 and peacefully joined our Lord on December 27, 2003 at the age of 77.

Her bereaved family, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Spouse	Rod
Children	Jesse, Carmen, Jun, Cynthia, Don, Babette, Mila and Ites
Children-in-law	Telly, Gus, Onie, Joseph, Lani, Nilo, Ronnie and Chris
Grandchildren	Budoy and Michelle, Jay and Alma, Jeff, Mark, Karla, Joyce, Vanrich, Jopet, Martin, Diday, Paulo, Tisha, Nica, Tin, KR, Ronjay, Clarisse and David
Great grandchildren	Miko and Mika
Brothers and Sisters	Eduardo, Isabel, Josefina, Miguel

Her remains lie in state at Arlington Memorial Chapels, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City

Cremation will follow shortly.

"...absent with the body to be present with the Lord."

2 Corinthians 5:8

MESSAGE OF THANKS

WE, the family and relatives of the late

Jules Francis "Jul-jul" Fuentes Dagohoy

Who joined His Creator on November 20, 2003

Wish to convey our sincere gratitude to all those who comforted us with their presence, conveyed inspiring words, Sent flowers and Spiritual offerings, kept vigil with us, attended the funeral rites and in many immeasurable ways joined us during our deepest hours of sorrow.

A Memorial Mass on the 40th Day for his Soul's eternal rest will be celebrated by Rev. Fr. Florencio Acedo, Jr. At the Manila Memorial Park ground, Ma-a, Davao City December 29, 2003 at 10:00 o'clock in the morning

Masses are also offered in the following churches and parishes:

1. San Lorenzo Ruiz Parish, Talomo, Davao City	December 28, 2003, 5:00 A.M.
2. Christ the King Chapel, Decoville Subd., Davao City	December 28, 2003, 7:00 A.M.
3. St. James Parish, Bunawan, Davao City	December 28, 2003, 7:30 A.M.
4. Sto. Rosario Parish, Toril, Davao City	December 28, 2003, 8:00 A.M.
5. San Pedro Cathedral, Davao City	December 28, 2003, 2:45 P.M.
6. Immaculate Concepcion Parish, Mintal, Davao City	December 28, 2003, 12:00 NN
7. St. Joseph Parish, San Jose, Batangas	December 29, 2003, 5:30 A.M.
8. Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, Bo. Obrero, Davao City	December 29, 2003, 6:00 A.M.
9. San Isidro Labrador Parish, Catalunan Grande, Davao	December 29, 2003, 6:00 A.M.
10. Assumption Church, F. Torres St., Davao City	December 29, 2003, 6:00 A.M.
11. Sto. Niño Parish, National Highway, Panabo City	December 29, 2003, 6:00 A.M.
12. Basilica of the Immaculate Concepcion, Batangas City	December 29, 2003, 6:15 A.M.
13. St. Peter & Paul Parish, Burgos St., Pob. Makati City	December 29, 2003, 7:00 A.M.
14. Sta. Ana Shrine Parish, Sta. Ana Ave., Davao City	December 29, 2003, 12:00 NN
15. San Antonio De Padua Parish, Agdao, Davao City	December 29, 2003, 5:15 P.M.
16. Our Lady of Fatima Parish, Fatima, Davao City	December 29, 2003, 5:15 P.M.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

INQUIRER OBITUARIES

DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT • MESSAGE OF THANKS • DEATH ANNIVERSARY • REQUIEMS • FREE OBIT DESIGN

For the needs of your departed Loved Ones, the following establishments can help you.

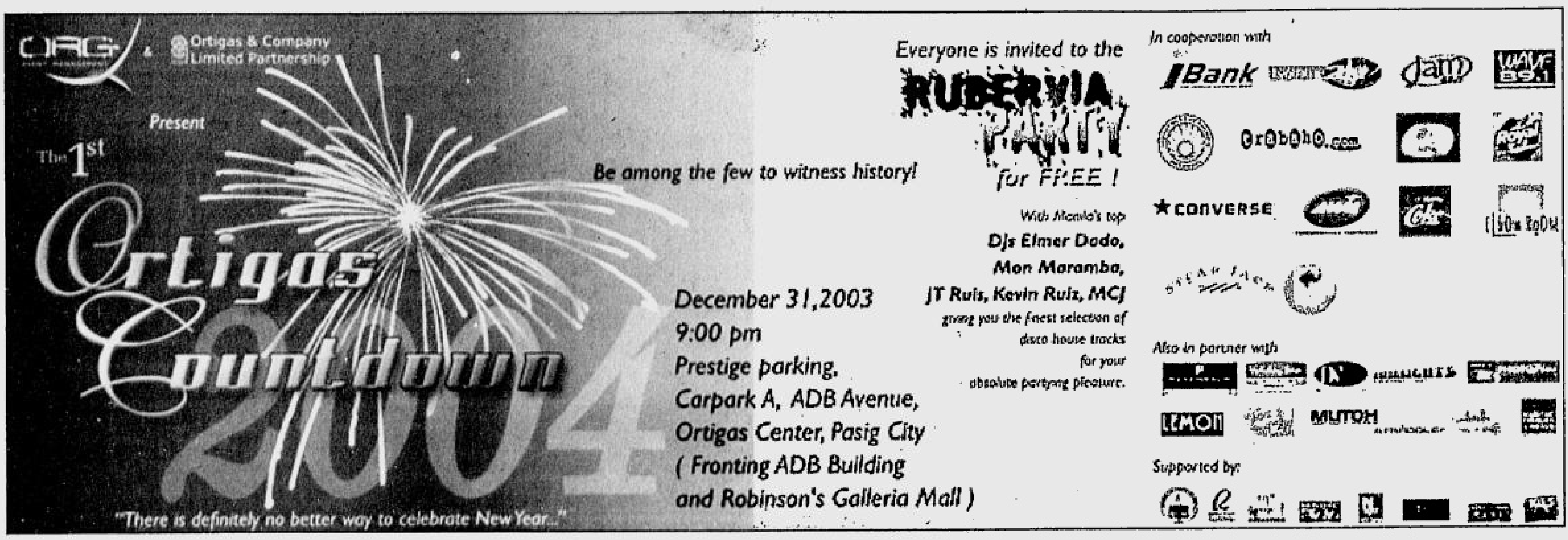
ARLINGTON MEMORIAL CHAPEL
12 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City. Tels. 715-1025; 715-1031; 715-1027
ARLINGTON EAST THE GARDEN CHAPELS
C. Raymundo St. cor. Mercedes Ave., San Miguel Ave., Pasig City
Tels. 747-8599; 747-8609 • Telefax 641-1760
AUREA QUIOGUE FUNERAL HOMES
243 A.B. Fernandez Ave., Dagupan City, Pangasinan
Tels. (0785) 522-3451; 522-2128; (0917) 434-9976
CAPITOL MEMORIAL CHAPELS INC.
1305 G. Araneta Ave., Quezon City Tel. 732-0309; 732-1095
CEBU ROLLING HILLS MEMORIAL CHAPELS INC.
Cebu Branch: A.S. Fortuna Street, Bandad, Mandaue City, Cebu; Tels. 346-2543; 346-2601
COSMOPOLITAN FUNERAL HOMES, INC.
Nivel Hills, Lahug, Cebu City Tels. 231-0721; 231-3192
COSMOPOLITAN FUNERAL HOMES, INC.
Camus Ext. cor. J. Abad Santos, Davao City; Tels. (082) 227-1201; 227-1258
DAYAO FUNERAL HOME
#2 Bayani St., Galas, Quezon City; Tels. 740-2683; 781-3705; 781-3688; 413-9400; 715-5594
DALLUAY MEMORIAL SERVICES
#42 Upper Kalaklan, Olongapo City
Tels. (047) 222-3605; (047) 811-1086; (047) 222-4512; (047) 224-2014
DON BOSCO CHAPELS
Pasay Road, Makati City. Tel. 894-5932 to 34
DULCE MEMORIAL SERVICES
Jose Abad Santos Ave. cor. Dinalupihan St., Manuguit, Manila
Tels. 712-5102; 741-5125; 741-5133; Fax No. 711-3064
DYNASTY MEMORIAL CHAPELS
965 Del Monte Ave., Frisco, Quezon City; Tels. 416-3231; 4162373
ERIC SANTIAGO MEMORIAL CHAPELS
26 Bayanbayan Ave., Concepcion I, Marikina City; Tels. 942-6044; 475-1177
FLORESCO FUNERAL HOME
219 Gen. Luna St., Concepcion, Malabon, Metro Manila; Tels. 2812963; 2813034; 2810522
FUNERARIA PANGILINAN
Santo Entierro cor. P. Burgos St., Lourdes Sur, Angeles City
Tels. (045) 888-2959; (045) 322-5247
FUNERARIA ANGEL QUIOGUE
No. 67 Pasig Boulevard Extension, Pasig City; Tels. 641-7909; 641-1735
M. Almeda St., Pateros, Metro Manila; Tels. 642-3010; 633-3602
FUNERARIA FILIPINAS
187 Real St., Zapote Alabang, Las Piñas; Tels. 873-0507; 873-0024
FUNERARIA FILIPINAS
865 J.P. Rizal St., Poblacion, Makati City; Tels. 890-3556; 899-8191
FUNERARIA TUASON
Poblacion, San Miguel, Bulacan 3011; Tels. (044) 764-0281; 678-0266; (0917) 895-0603
FUNERARIA SAMSON
145 Bayan Luma, Imus, Cavite; Tels. (046) 471-3375; 471-2675
GARDEN OF MEMORIES MEMORIAL PARK
Calsadang Bago, Pateros, Metro Manila; Tels. 642-6181 to 82
HERITAGE PARK
Bayani Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila
Tels. (DL) 845-2341 to 42, (TL) 845-2334 to 38 loc. 110/112
HOLY GARDENS MEMORIAL PARK
Third Level, Unishoppe Complex Quezon Ave., Angono, Rizal • Tels. 651-1711; 651-0737
HOLY TRINITY MEMORIAL CHAPELS
Dr. A. Santos Ave., Sucat Rd., Sucat, Parañaque City; Tels. 825-1296; 825-1291, Telefax: 825-1314
LA FUNERARIA LAWRENCE BAQUIRAN
#27 Crisologo St., Vigan, Ilocos Sur, Tel. 722-2730; Cell (0917) 5680136; (0917) 5680145
Manila #23 Palo St., Project 2, Quezon City; Tel. 434-3258

LA FUNERARIA PAZ, INC.
1501 C.M. Recto Ave. cor. T. Mapua, Manila; Tels. 711-6931 to 35; 732-4795; 732-2827
LA FUNERARIA PAZ, INC.
143 G. Araneta Ave. cor. Kaliraya St., Quezon City• Tels. 749-3806 to 11; 712-3001; 743-6502 or 05
LA FUNERARIA PAZ, SUCAT, INC.
Dr. A. Santos Ave., Sucat, Parañaque; Tels. 820-1592, 825-9947; 825-8635
LA FUNERARIA PAZ, INC.
79 Naguilian Rd., Baguio City; Tel. (074) 443-3337; (074) 442-3117
LA FUNERARIA SAPINOSO
G. Tirona St., Imus, Cavite; Tels. (046) 471-3386; (046) 471-4417; (046) 571-1978
LINCOLN MEMORIAL SERVICES, INC.
Ground Floor, JEMP Bldg., J. Cabarrus cor. Monserrat Sts., Phase I, BF Commercial Center, Parañaque, Metro Manila
LOYOLA MEMORIAL CHAPELS
EDSA cor. Bernardino St., Guadalupe, Makati City; Tels. 895-1011 to 19
LOYOLA MEMORIAL PARK CHAPELS & CREMATORY SERVICES
Loyola Memorial Park, A. Bonifacio Avenue, Tañong, Marikina City
Tels. 941-3196 to 98; 941-3678; Telefax 941-3577
MARIAN MEMORIAL CHAPELS
Marcos Hiway, Antipolo, Rizal; Tels. 645-1855; 682-0209; 682-0210
MARCELO FUNERAL HOMES
Tels. 283-1613; 273-8922
MT. SINAI MEMORIAL CHAPEL
Arellano St., Dagupan City; Tels. (075) 515-5960; 522-8783; (0917) 520-5001
NACIONAL MEMORIAL HOMES
264 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City; Tels. 713-5231 to 35; 714-0867; 714-0868
OUR LADY OF PEACE MEMORIAL PARK CHAPEL & SERVICES, INC.
No. 6 Carigma St., Antipolo City 1870 • Tel. No. 697-0782; 697-0026, 650-7426, Fax: 697-2764
PAKET SANTIAGO MEMORIAL HOMES
13 V. Gomez St., San Roque, Marikina City; Tels. 646-1725, 646-1730
POPULAR MEMORIAL CHAPELS, INC.
2141 Rizal Ave., Sta. Cruz, Manila; Tel. Nos. 254-0867, 254-0839
PRIME MEMORIAL CHAPELS
200 Commonwealth Ave., Quezon City; Tels. 427-8412; 4278403
ROLLING HILLS MEMORIAL CHAPELS INC.
Ground Flr. Rolling Hills Chapel, 27th-Lacson St., Mandalagan, Bacolod City, Tel. 433-7132
RIZAL FUNERAL HOMES
438 Cementina St., Pasay City; Tels. 831-1204 • Sucat Branch: 8187 Dr. A. Santos Ave., Sucat, Parañaque City
Tels. 826-1376; 826-9682, (0915) 712-1220
SANTUARIO DE SAN ANTONIO PARISH
Forbes Park, Makati City; Tel. Nos. 843-8838-30, Fax No. 843-9223
SANTUARIO DE SAN JOSE PARISH
East Greenhills, Mandaluyong City; Telefax 724-4139; 725-2044
ST. ALPHONSUS MARY DE LIGOURI PARISH
Magallanes Village, Makati City; Tels. 852-8228; 852-7284
ST. MARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL
16-15 G. Tuazon cor. Loreto St., Sampaloc, Manila, Tels. 749-3679; 781-1772
ST. PETER FUNERAL HOMES
296 Quezon Ave., Quezon City; Tels. 372-5084, 410-9286/87
UNIVERSAL FUNERAL SERVICE & MEMORIAL CHAPELS
2028 Rizal Ave., Sta. Cruz, Manila, Tels. 493-4458; 493-4540
VERONICA MEMORIAL HOMES
Official NBI Morgue 517-A Arnaiz St., Pasay City; Tels. 831-3797, 844-7846, 843-1801; 845-4836
WELINGTON FUNERAL SERVICES
1511 Gen. Luna St., Paco, Manila, Tel. 302-5447
ZUASOLA FUNERAL HOMES
Brgy. Del Remedio, San Pablo City, Laguna
Tels. (049) 562-1668; 800-2914 Cel. No. (0917) 5016963

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS: ❶ Copy of Death Certificate ❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

WE ACCEPT CREDIT CARDS and bank-to-bank payments

CLASSIFIEDS



PLDT sets aside ₱18B for expenditures in '04

By Abigail L. Ho

DOMINANT carrier Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. is setting aside around P18 billion for capital expenditures next year, the bulk of which will go to the expansion of cellular subsidiary Smart Communications Inc.

PLDT president and chief executive Manuel Pangilinan said Smart would have a budget of around P11 billion, roughly the same amount earmarked for 2003.

As of the third quarter of the year, Smart had already spent P6.9 billion of its programmed expenditures. He said the cellular giant would likely cap the year with a total spending of between P9 billion and P10 billion.

The P9 billion to P10 billion figure, he said, would represent 20 percent of the firm's total sales revenues, which will likely hit between P47 billion and P48 billion by year's end.

With revenues expected to further increase in 2004, Pangilinan said expenditures as a percentage of revenues for Smart would either be flat or below 20 percent in 2004. Even if next year's budget would be slightly higher than the actual amount spent this year.

Smart, still the country's biggest cellular service provider, both in terms of subscriber base and number of cell sites, will continue rolling out network infrastructure in areas still not covered by its more than 3,400 cell sites scattered all over the country.

In an earlier interview, Smart president and chief executive Napoleon Nazareno said the company would be focusing its network expansion efforts on areas outside Metro Manila where the penetration rate was not even nearly as big as in the urban areas.

For PLDT's fixed line business, Pangilinan said the group would be jacking up its capital expenditure allocation to P7 billion from between P5 billion and P6 billion this year.

As of the first nine months of 2003, PLDT fixed line had spent a little less than P3.9 billion of its full-year budget. He said fixed line would likely end up spending between P5.7 billion and P5.8 billion by end-2003.

"Our capex would be below P6 billion, about P5.7 billion to P5.8 billion for this year. Our sales would be P45 billion, so (capex) would roughly be about 17 percent of revenues in 2003," he said.

The increase in allocated capex for fixed line next year is in line with PLDT's efforts to enhance its data infrastructure, particularly those being used in its Internet business.

"Our fixed line capex will rise to about P7 billion because we're going to have a rapid build-out of principally our DSL (digital subscriber line). We will be firing up more fiber optic cables to widen the pipes and increase the speed mainly on our data business and partly because of the increased data usage of Smart," he said.

PLDT is concentrating on building the subscriber base of its always-on, high-speed Internet access as well as its dial-up Internet service, Vibe.

Of the P7 billion earmarked for next year's capex, 30 percent would be spent for network maintenance while the remaining 70 percent would be used for network expansion.

SHARE the gift of saving

Give your loved ones the best gift this Christmas. Share with them the habit of saving. United Overseas Bank Philippines offers you sensible choices to secure your blessings and make them grow. Backed by the strength and reliability of a trusted regional banking group. Now and for all seasons, we are with you.
We're united behind you.
Visit us at www.uob.com.ph

Member: Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation (Deposits insured up to P 100,000)
A PROUD MEMBER OF: BancNet
Member: Pana

大 華 銀 行
UNITED OVERSEAS BANK

NTC to bid out ₱102M worth of substations

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE NATIONAL Transmission Corp. is bidding out contracts to build P102 million worth of substations and is buying P59 million worth of power line service vehicles to kick off next year's efforts to upgrade and maintain the national transmission grid.

In notices to contractors, Transco's bids and awards committee chair Winifredo Pangilinan said a138-kilovolt and 69-kV equipment were needed for a new substation in Maco, Compostela Valley.

The Maco contract has a budget of P75.99 million and should be completed within 330 days. Works include site development and building of control house, switchyard, pumphouse and putting up the transmission line.

Also, Pangilinan said 138-kV equipment were needed for the Batbangon Substation in Leyte.

The Batbangon project, which is under the Leyte-Samar interconnection reinforcement program, has a price ceiling of P26.41 million and should be done in 300 days.

The official advised interested contractors to submit their applications for eligibility not later than Jan. 12, but he did not say when the deadline for submission of the bids were.

In a third notice, Pangilinan invited suppliers to offer bids for the provision of 44 brand new transportation and power line maintenance vehicles.

Bidding will be held for two batches, with the first covering 14 trucks under a budget of P30.25 million and the second covering 30 pickups for a price cap of P28.75 million.

The deadline for submission of eligibility requirements was set on Jan. 15.

Under Transco's Mindanao transmission augmentation program or Project Minta, the company is rushing some P2.1 billion worth of projects aimed to address the overloading of selected power transformer units and improve the reliability of service in Mindanao within a year.

Transco documents showed that the projects would modernize and add capacity to existing substations, expand 69-kilovolt transmission lines and increase load capacity on existing ones.

Further, Transco had identified some P4.7 billion worth of projects that would support several vital inter-island connection works worth P11.2 billion, all meant to improve the Visayas power grid in the next five years.

Corn output to go up by 6 percent

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE COUNTRY'S corn production will improve by at least 6 percent between January and March 2004 as farmers are expected to increase area hectarage in anticipation of firmer selling prices and good weather, Agriculture Secretary Luis P. Lorenzo Jr. said.

"Corn prices will remain attractive and the weather is seen to be generally favorable. We expect production areas to expand even more and the result will be a better harvest next year," said Lorenzo in an interview Friday.

Based on planting intentions recorded in October, corn output will likely rise 6 percent to 1.44 million metric tons in the first quarter of 2004 from last year's 1.35 million MT due to the increased production in key growing areas in Mindanao and Cagayan Valley, Bureau of Agriculture Statistics data indicated.

Lorenzo added that the 6 percent is still the low-end of the target and "a higher growth forecast for the corn sector could even be higher."

"With farm gate prices remaining firm in recent months—hitting a high of P8 per kilo for yellow corn in mid-October and hovering at P7.10 per kilo as of Dec. 19 from an average of P6.47 posted during the same period last year—more farmers would want to cultivate the crop," said Lorenzo.

BUSINESS Monday

E-mail: pr_business@inquirer.com.ph

Business Features Editor
Margie Quimpo-Espino

BOTE
QUALITY WINS THE FUTURE
MERCURY/FLOURESCENT LAMPS
MINI-LAMP/ELECTRONIC CFL W/ CAPSULE
AVAILABLE AT ALL LEADING ELECTRICAL & HARDWARE STORES NATIONWIDE

WOOING OF THE PINOY CONSUMER

Successfully romancing Juan de La Cruz

By Frances J. Yu
Contributor

WINNING the hearts and minds of today's Filipino consumer has never been harder. That's because Juan de La Cruz is changing. He has become fickle. He is inundated with more choices today than in any other period in our history as a nation. He has become more discriminating, more demanding, restless, empowered, aware, knowledgeable, and intolerant. He has the power to choose from a wide range of retail outlets in which to spend his hard earned money—from sari-sari stores, bazaars, department stores, supermarkets, specialty boutiques, warehouse clubs, category killers, hypermarts, and a whole slew of other retailing formats that have sprouted like the proverbial mushroom. He has his pick of products and services that cater to every conceivable lifestyle and budget.

With all these choices facing the Filipino consumer today, does this mean that retailers must now lie prostrate in front of the customer, promise to love him till death do them part? Must retailers kowtow and beg to be chosen among all the other eligible outlets out there? Are we to believe that if we love our customers enough that they will love us right back?

Like the game of love, wooing the customer is a delicate tug-of-war that plays more on emotion, excitement, and intrigue. An ever-discriminating consumer cannot easily be won over if you simply fawn all over him. The techniques of marketing to the sophisticated consumer can be likened to trying to captivate the heart and mind of an eligible bachelor. It comes less from mindlessly catering to his every whim, and more from understanding human nature. These are some of the time-honored principles that are as applicable to marketing as they are to courtship: create scarcity and you will create demand, be consistently inconsistent, and dare to be different. In short marketers, like maidens, accomplish more by playing a little hard to get.

Create scarcity, demand

When wooing a potential love interest, always being available is almost a guarantee of being taken for granted. Unavailability heightens desire. Similarly in retail, scarcity creates demand. One only needs to look at recent history at the products that have been in most demand such as Beanie Babies or Beyblades to realize that the less stock you have, the more they fly off the shelves, with customers scrambling to get their names on a waiting list.

Following the same logic, a one day sale is always more successful than a one month sale. If you advertise an exclusive sale, you can bet it will be mobbed. The Rustan Department Store's annual exclusive FSP sale has always had a massive following. Exclusivity and scarcity allows the buyer to luxuriate in the belief that they are one of the lucky ones, the select few, the discerning elite.

Be consistently inconsistent

Being unpredictable is one of the surefire ways to keep a paramour intrigued and interested. In the same way, being consistently inconsistent by constantly surprising or delighting your customers through unexpected marketing campaigns will keep them coming back for more.

The first Bench underwear fashion show is a classic example of surprising the market-at-large. This edgy marketing campaign sent shockwaves through the media, and led to record breaking sales of underwear for the retail establishment. Of course, being consistently inconsistent does not apply to the basics of the business, such as quality, service, and value. It is simply being unpredictable in a positive way, in a way that keeps your customers on their toes.

Dare to be different

The one that stands out in a sea of clutter is positioned to be the chosen one. Being different is the anti-thesis of imitation, which, as Oscar Wilde says, "is the sincerest way of saying you haven't got an original idea in your head."

"ME TOOism" is a malady that has infected many marketers today. Do not be a wannabe. To stand out from the rest, you must establish a unique point of difference that is widely valued and beneficial to consumers. A difference that cannot be easily imitated by competition, and that is sustainable over a period of time. Employ wit and emotion to communicate this difference. This is in stark contrast to what we often see as we drive down major thoroughfares throughout the metropolis. Billboards that are uncannily similar save for the big name endorser featured, abound. Very few actually succeed in creating a meaningful point of difference.

In conclusion, the goal of any retailer is to win the lifetime loyalty of its best customers. Like marriage, this is an elusive and challenging goal particularly in a hyper competitive retail environment. It begins with attracting the love interest and progresses to wining and dining. And if you're lucky, it will eventually lead to a committed relationship. Longevity is the name of the game, and longevity isn't achieved through mediocrity. Otherwise, disillusionment and eventually infidelity will likely occur. And your business, like a bride left waiting at the altar, will be left desolate.

How to rate your local government

By Dennis M. Arroyo
Contributor

ELECTIONS are coming up next year, so it's best to grade your local officials early on.

Recall that there are two main parties dancing the tango. The local government unit (LGU) supplies public services to its constituents: ordinary citizens, the private sector, and civic groups.

In turn, the constituents convey their public service needs to their leaders.

Some monitoring systems just track performance from the government's side. They look at management concerns like efficiency and resource generation. Others focus only on the welfare impact on families. A complete system should examine both angles and yet remain simple.

This is the special approach of the Governance for Local Development (Gofordev) Index.

The index was designed by the Philippine Center for Policy Studies (PCPS), based at the UP School of Economics in Diliman. Its project director is Dr. Joseph J. Capuno, an assistant professor there. The Ford Foundation financed the venture.

There are three main indices that make up the Gofordev Index.

Are basic needs well met?

The first is the Development Needs Index or DNI, and it follows the minimum basic needs approach. People have survival needs like food and nutrition, security needs like income and livelihood, and enabling needs like education and community participation.

Social scientists use a whole array of indicators to track the basic needs, but this is cumbersome. The DNI uses only a few indicators, as the PCPS has learned from earlier researchers. They note that LGUs respond to only minimal information on unmet needs.

"Hence they are much like the proverbial smoking gun that portends but does not portray a serious crime," says Capuno.

The DNI measures how well the local government helps attend to the basic needs of the area, using both subjective and objective indicators.

Surveys ask families if their LGU has contributed to improving their living conditions. They also ask if the LGU is effective at solving their most pressing public

HOW TO RATE/ B2-4

One day
you discover...
Go ZOOM-ZOOM

The changing course of rural banking

MAPping THE FUTURE

Antonio T. Hernandez

THE COURSE of Philippine rural banking system straddles on two imperatives—prospects and capabilities. How promising are the business prospects, and how prepared are the rural banks will spell the direction of the system. Stated another way, what has the future in store for rural banks? Can their capabilities measure up to the competitive and regulatory pressures in a field which is getting more crowded by the day? ... where the branches of big banks have closed in and where non-banks (credit cooperatives, lending investors, NGOs, pension funds, finance companies) are comprising the informal sector? What will it take to keep pace with the rising demands of a changing frontier?

Like any other industry which has its cycle of ups and downs, rural banking had its pioneering years in the 50s; saw its high point in the 70s with over a thousand banks in the system; experienced financial difficulties toward the 80s which seemed almost irreversible; and then, as it approach the 90s, the promise of recovery turned up. It was the nineties which saw the unflinching effort of a young and progressive breed of rural bankers out to reenergize the industry and diversify its services; and the solidarity of government entities particularly the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), the Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP), and the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. (PDIC) to launch programs which would strengthen and bring the industry back to contention.

Strengthening the ranks

Given the nature of the rural banking market and the development philosophy of rural banks (which are obviously complementary and in congruence with the development direction of government, i.e., agri-agra reform), the need to support and bring the industry back to the mainstream of countryside finance was distinctly evident.

The creation at LandBank of a rural banking group (RBG) was a major first step to that mainstreaming drive. And it moved ahead to become a structural masterstroke at linking with and strengthening the rural banking network. With a lean but specialized regional arm, RBG provided the necessary operational focus in a fast and direct line of command, all the way from field action-research to headquarters policy-making. An organizational best practice, the group produced during its time an excellent corps of industry specialists who would help put together the building blocks for a countryside banking linkage—an essential dimension in wholesale banking and/or alternative to traditional organic branching.

The strengthening drive focussed on the RBs high-profile issues categorized into:

Asset quality and liquidity concerns—two pervasive performance inhibitors;

Recapitalization needs to meet regulatory financial measures; and management and corporate governance effectiveness.

Accordingly, programs were crafted to respond and counter the downturn in asset quality, in liquidity, in capital and in management. The early nineties saw the full flowering of the following initiatives:

- A customized rediscounting scheme to enable rural banks increase their earning assets and meet the credit needs of more small farmers and local enterprises—an LBP financial bestseller fortified by free operations review engagements (to identify strengths and weaknesses) in aid to RBs' risk management and profit planning;
- The internally-funded liquidity pools at federation (regional) level participated in by 386 RBs, projected to grow into a national liquidity fund, not only to provide safety net to depositors and promote savings, but also to ensure readiness of the RBs to respond to funding contingencies;
- An equity build-up program to recapitalize RBs and/or support mergers and consolidations;
- A string of training courses and a professional manager support program; and
- A correspondent banking relationship encompassing collection tie-up, fund transfers, leasing, trust, custodianship and clearing arrangements.

This bundle of services made a de facto apex bank out of its servicing, wholesaling entity (LBP), with over 500 RBs then in the link. It was a welcome development towards a vibrant countryside linkage-banking scenario—a prototype of India's successful National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development's institutional linkage with over 30,600 rural and cooperative banking units apart from 92,000 primary credit societies.

Catalytic role

Tempered by the lessons of the past, the rural banks plodded on to play a catalytic role in awakening the rural financial market; in eventually breathing renewed life to livelihood credit and deposit-taking. The industry has at one time successfully launched a unified national deposit campaign for all rural banks as a single countrywide network. It was a remarkable milestone which should have served as a splendid opportunity for a national savings policy follow-thru and for the National Commission on Savings to be back to real active mode. For as it is, the country is still a laggard in terms of its national savings ratio to GNP vis-à-vis its Asian neighbors.

It is worth noting that the RBs have become an active player in micro-finance. Their resources have mostly been employed and reinvested in loans to low-income farmers and small rural entrepreneurs in their localities. Compliance to Agra Reform and to Agri Credit stood at 14.31 percent and 36.36 percent of loanable funds respectively or 143 percent and 242 percent of minimum requirement for end of 2000. Whereas the rest of the commercial banks was at 8.52 percent and 22.84 percent or 85 percent and 152 percent of the 10 percent and 15 percent agra-agri requirement respectively.

Notwithstanding the riskiness of the market they serve, the RBs managed to attain a return on equity of 10 percent as of 2000 as against the 3.5 percent of the banking system. As of end of 2002, net past due rate was no more than 9.78 percent and risk asset ratio at 18.54 percent. Loans totalled P50.53 billion, deposits at P54.38 billion, and networth at P13.17 billion for a 3-year average growth rate of 7 percent, 15 percent and 11 percent respectively. With these figures who wouldn't find it attractive to expand to the countryside and link up with RBs in rural finance?

It is no surprise therefore that non-banks, more so branches of commercial banks are getting more visible in the provinces. They are trooping fast to the preserve of rural banks—to literally do their fishing right in the RBs' own ponds. While it may point to the bright potential of countryside banking, commercial banks are nonetheless still cautious. They concentrate on the more profitable, less risky aspect of intermediation—going after deposits and doing selective commercial lending—leaving out the risk of agri-agra finance to the small community banking units.

Development trend

The unfolding market events would seriously ask of rural banks to critically reassess the countryside business dynamics and prepare themselves for the surprises. What new signs are appearing in the horizon? What are the opportunities and the options? I am sure, even the undiscerning among us will unmistakably notice the trend—the direction of events—coming on the way of the banking industry which are, among others:

the emergence of micro-finance technology;

the emphasis on domestic tourism;

the rise of small and medium enterprises;

the advancement in information technology;

the globalization of operations;

the dispersal of industries to regional sites; and

the devolution of central government functions to local government units.

The regional skylines, where we have the industrial parks and/or economic zones, are definitely experiencing change notwithstanding politics and issues of security. The ripple effect of these zonal developments will surely spill over to outlying communities and create markets for agricultural produce.

The development of local transport, the coming of age of more prepared self-help groups, and the entry of micro-finance, are ushering in a lot of banking opportunities in greater magnitude. The influx of branches to the provinces is a clear affirmation of the bright prospects ahead.

Fiercer competition

The irony however, is that these developments also bring in a scenario of fiercer competition. It is made even tougher by the trend towards less product differentiation among financial institutions. And for the RBs, this means directly contending with larger banks and non-banks on equal footing.

With products and services taking on a broader dimension—transcending geographic borders as technology puts them online—innovation will demand utmost attention. Rural banks then must have to buckle-up and challenge the status quo; must look inward and improve efficiency; grow more in creativity and in assertiveness.

As non-banks move in and marketing emphasis shifts from price to customer satisfaction, banks will have to reinvent themselves so they become prime providers of both traditional banking services and new innovative financial packages enhanced by superior service relationship. If non-banking entities, moving gradually into the banking market, perform much faster, smoother or cheaper, they may one day replace banks. As some quarters would say, while banking may be important to the economy, banks may not necessarily be.

Enhancing governance

Luckily, rural banks have their unique competitive edge to build on; e.g., accessibility of senior management and the authority to respond quickly to operational problems; minimal turnover of personnel; customer decisions (like asset or liability prices) easily made at the local level; strong community involvement and contacts.

But to tap into this industry's competitive edge, especially during periods of systemic problems, RBs should have to move fast in developing not only their ability to compete but also their capacity to manage opportunity and growth. And central to this effort is the current buzzword hereabouts—"corporate governance"—which David Carse, Deputy Chief Executive of the Hongkong Monetary Authority, defines as "the system by which shareholders and creditors direct and control a company." The weak corporate governance of Asian banks was a key factor which aggravated the Asian crisis. It was a situation characterized by: 1) total control by owners operating as "autocracies" and defending their banks from new structural value-creating changes; 2) connected lending practices or DOSRI; 3) emphasis on growth rather than on return of capital; and 4) inadequate formal risk management policies and systems.

The issuances of the Basle Committee on Banking Supervision are valuable materials to promote sound governance (ADBI Executive Summary Series S36/01) . It in fact urges:

1. establishing of strategic objectives and corporate values; and the processes to monitor compliance. Does the planning process encompass longer range business strategy? Is there a strong culture of doing what is ethical rather than exploiting the loose ends and reporting "managed numbers" from a "cooked" book of accounts? Who monitors compliance to strategy and values?

2. ensuring that Board members are qualified, understand clearly their role in corporate governance, and not be subject to undue influence from management and other concerns. Just how independent are the company directors? How objective do they evaluate issues and seek clarification?

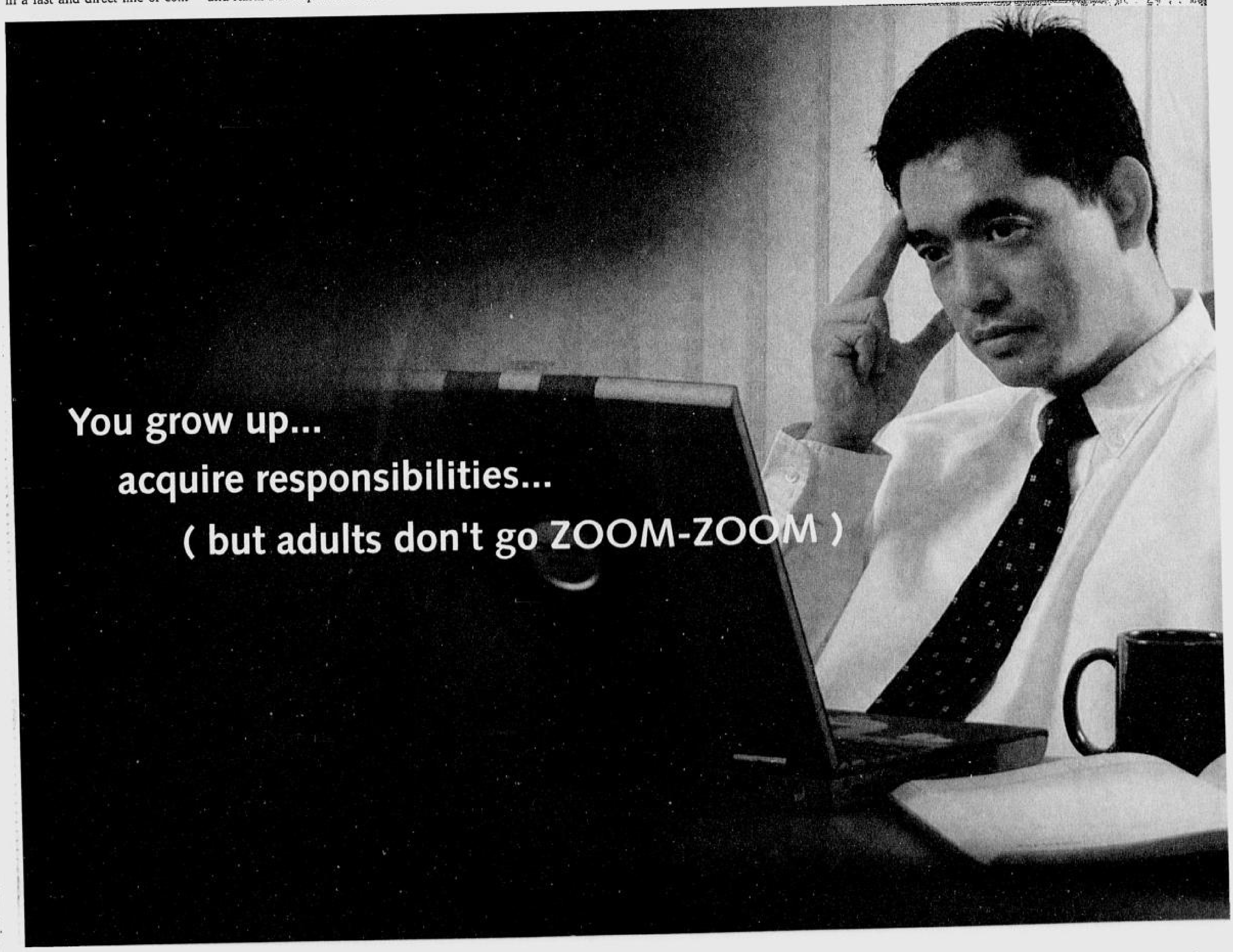
3. setting and enforcing clear lines of organizational responsibility and accountability. Is there clear delineation and delegation of authority? Is there an appreciation of accounting standards, of regulatory requirements and policies? Does top management walk the talk? Does it focus and decide on the strategic or is it stuck in micro-managing?

4. effective use of the work undertaken by internal and external auditors. Is there line ownership of internal controls? Is there an independently functioning audit committee? Are audit results heeded and duly acted upon?

5. compensation consistent with bank's institutional values, objectives, strategy and control environment. Is it one which is linked more with longer term business strategy rather than short-term performance of bank? and

6. transparency of governance which allows a broader public to

THE CHANGING/ B2-4


You grow up...
acquire responsibilities...
(but adults don't go ZOOM-ZOOM)

ELZE

ROBBINS

MACUJA-ELIZALDE

SANTOS

DIMSON

TRILLO

High-end eyewear line asks achievers to define success

MORRIS

THE BRAND Mont Blanc is known for its writing instruments. But over the past years, they have expanded their product line to include leather goods, watches, and lately eyewear.

The economy may not be enjoying the best of times but high-end retailers do declare they are enjoying brisk sales.

One of the reasons for this is that travel has dropped and with most high-end brands already available in the local market, those who can afford simply opt to buy here.

Mont Blanc is banking on this as it launched its eyewear recently. The price tag is not for everyone at P18,000 to P25,000 a pair. But their target market are achievers, young and old — who have reached success in their chosen fields.

Every year Mont Blanc recognizes individuals who made outstanding contributions to the development of art and culture all over the world. It is known for its support and encouragement towards achievers and movers in the society. The slogan "Is that You?" refers to individuals whom Mont Blanc feels personify what the brand symbolizes.

Mont Blanc individuals

The Mont Blanc individuals are dedicated, successful and driven. They are people who have uncompromising sense of taste and style. They appreciate combined modernity and traditional luxury, the complete embodiment of an elitist lifestyle. Their lifestyle demands perfection and they live for values that will last for generations.

"VISIONS" by Mont Blanc Eyewear was recently launched via a photo exhibit of nine personalities who personify Mont Blanc.

Lisa Macuja-Elizalde is a great contributor to the Philippine Arts and Culture with her world-class achievements. Hailed as the "Ballerina of the People" she is committed to bringing ballet closer to the hearts of the Filipino people through Ballet Manila which she herself put up. She is dedicated to her profession as a Vice Chairperson of Philippine Unesco National Commission.

"Success is a never ending process. We must always strive to give more of ourselves and to be the best we can be," she says.

"Dedication is pouring your heart and mind into one thing that is dear to you," says Pia Cayetano, a lawyer and entrepreneur with ten retail stores of Maxibear, Maxitoylab, Maxiworks and Just Born, distributor of educational toys and children's apparel.

"Success is not measured by what you accomplished but by the courage you have to struggle against overwhelming odds. The highest achievement one can fulfill is giving your dedication" towards what you do and what you aim to attain," says Dick B. Robbins, the headmaster and administrator of Brent International School Manila.

"Dedication is achieved by giving all your heart and mind in order to succeed. Success is not a state, it is a process," says Claas Elze, vice president for Hotel Development in Asia Pacific of Marriott International Inc. and a graduate of Hotel Management from the Cornell University in New York.

"When you are happy in life, that is success," says Joaqui Trillo, the general manager of Alaska Aces in the PBA. He is also Alaska's Sports Development Manager.

Achieving goals

Achieving your goals

"Success is is being able to achieve goals you have set for yourself, not only in your chosen profession, but also in your personal life. There must be a balance so that success is present in all areas of your life," says Eric Dimson, an outstanding pianist and dean of the Yamaha School of Music. An alumnus of UP College of Music, he studied Electone Organ Performance at the Yamaha School of Music in Tokyo.

"Success is about honesty and integrity. It is achieving things honorably. Dedication is about sheer willpower, focus and commitment to do things right, to do things better or to be the best," says Simon Morris, the CEO and President of Standard Chartered Bank in the Philippines. He has vast experience in banking having held key positions based in London, Brunei and Africa.

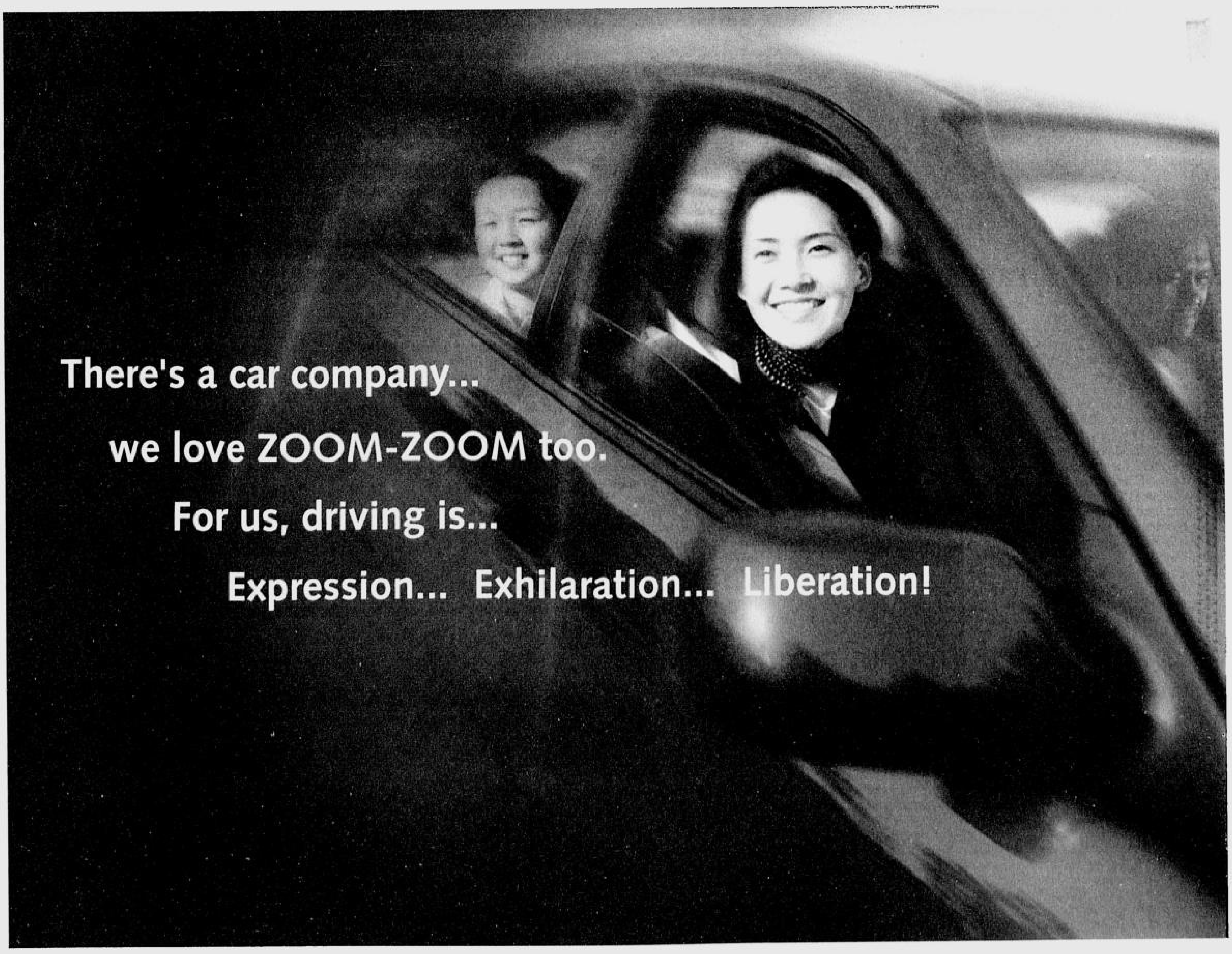
"Success is dependent on external acknowledgement but a sense of achievement is between oneself and God," says Jaime Noel Santos, director of the Thames International Business School.

"Dedication, Perfection, Achievements and Success are four elements of fulfillment. It boils down to mind and spirit. Your mind dictates the standard and the spirit fulfills the soul," says Juan Miguel Ongsiaco, a young and successful industrialist with ventures in export and import, food and furniture businesses.

. The snow-covered peak of Mont Blanc is a crowning inspiration that has been used to symbolize the high quality status of the brand. Each of the frames by Mont Blanc Eyewear has characteristics of style and quality making them unique and exclusive objects. Two brand icons: white star and three rings, living up the legend of the brand, embody the Mont Blanc Eyewear Collection. Evoking the elegance and restraint of the historic Meisterstuck pen and fountain pen, all models of Mont Blanc Eyewear bear the famous Mont Blanc white star carefully crafted in screw heads or embedded into the temple tips and the three rings curved around the temples .

CAYETANO

ONGSIAKO


There's a car company...
we love ZOOM-ZOOM too.
For us, driving is...
Expression... Exhilaration... Liberation!

'Communication is the key to make things clear'

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

MANAGEMENT STYLES

INDIA is as diverse culturally as it is large and this backdrop provided SAP Phils. Inc. managing director Krish Datta with the dexterity to lead employees from different countries.

Aside from the Philippines, Datta likewise heads the operations of the German software giant in Indonesia and in Vietnam.

He tells the INQUIRER that he operates the Philippines in quite a different way from Indonesia.

"When I was just managing Indonesia, I was very hands on but when the Philippines was added early this year, I had to learn to manage from a distance," Datta says.

Thus, he invests a considerable part of his time keeping in constant touch with all his direct reports from the different countries to make sure that everybody knows where each company is going.

"I have a phone for each country and I always check my mail. For me, communication is the main thing to make things clear and known to all. Everybody must have the same sense of purpose, the feeling that they should know what the company is doing and the rationale behind how things are being done," Datta says.

In Indonesia, he is more directly involved in the operations because he knows the market more, having been involved since 1999 in sales of different SAP products.

Datta admits that there was a time when he was something of a micro manager who wanted to be on top of all decisions that the company made.

Datta, however, was sent in 2001 to a global leadership development program with the renowned Insead, and there he learned to take a step back and trust people to make the right decisions even if he is not there.

"The program taught me that it is important to develop a second tier group and to delegate the work. I am doing that a lot here in the Philippines," he says.

SAP's Krish Datta

An important ingredient, he explains, is mutual trust and respect and it starts from him as the leader.

"If you are transparent as a leader, then life is much easier. What I do is to try and hear everybody so that they will have an ownership in major decisions. We cannot leave the room and go two different ways. There must be a meeting of minds," he says.

Datta says that he did not find it difficult to adjust to the Philippines but he came in knowing that the people had high expectations of him.

"There was a bit of apprehension but when you use some common sense and have a healthy respect for people, then you will be able to do business," he says.

Datta also stresses that he adjusts his style depending on the people, saying that it is much easier than to expect the whole organization to adjust to him.

He, however, will never compromise on principles saying that it has proven to be the downfall of CEOs.

"If you look at why CEOs fail, you can trace back and see how many times they kept on doing compromises and ignored the writing on the wall," he says.

"For me it is not too difficult to make hard business decisions for the good of the company and the people and not let emotions come into play," he adds.

Datta has been with SAP for nine years and he says that he is fortunate the the company gave him a lot of independence to call the shots as he sees fit.

He tries to offer the same independence to his staff in different countries for as long as they are aligned toward a single goal for the company.

As a result, SAP in the Philippines has continued to do good business despite the downturn in the local economy and Datta looks forward to a better year ahead with the support of his people.

How to rate your local government

From page B2-1

problems.

Then there are the objective questions. Do their local day care centers have regular teachers, social workers or attendants? Does their rural health center have regular health staff? Do they have difficulty getting safe drinking water? Answers provide ratios, and these are all put together into the DNI.

Are funds really used for development?

The second main component is the Development Orientation Index or DOI. LGUs should put their money where their mouth is. That is, the local budget should reflect true development priorities. However, the staff of local governments are often filled with political appointees and they are retained due to civil service laws.

"Hence, this practice tends to bloat local budgets with dubious impact on actual service delivery," says Capuno. A high level of spending on personnel services may point to wasted public resources.

This index measures how much of the local budget goes to social and economic services, net of personnel services. The less the drag of personnel payroll, the greater is the ratio.

Do officials consult the people?

The third component is the Participatory Development Index or PDI. This measures the degree of the people's direct participation in LGU decision-making. It also looks into the extent that the LGU embarks on public consultations.

Without consultation, leaders follow wrong priorities and embark on wrong projects.

The PDI assigns points if the local school board was convened at least once last year, with the involvement of the Parent Teacher Associations. Points are also recorded if the Municipal Development Council convened at least twice last year, with private sector participants.

Surveys reveal how many of the respondents were consulted at least once last year by their barangay officials as well as how many respondents were aware that their mayor or vice mayor attended at least one barangay-level consultation last year.

These three indices, the DNI, the DOI and the PDI, are summed up to produce the Gofordev Index. It ranges from 0 to 100, the highest possible score.

Eyes opened

The team tested the Gofordev index in two pilot provinces, Bulacan and Davao del Norte. It has reportedly opened the eyes of local officials, particularly the mayors. In two cities and two municipalities, the mayors are now using the index for their planning and assessment sessions.

More than that, the index has made local government accounts more transparent. Some people are surprised to learn that the data are obtained from available public documents. Residents are more aware of the amounts being poured into public services. They now know how these funds impact on their welfare. *Comments to darroyo@philonline.com*

Goodness Graces ...

From page B2-5

but in order to mingle with the locals as you will be doing, bear in mind that in most eateries people use their fingers. A good tip is to follow what your host does.

Some reminders when you do eat with your fingers:

- The left hand is not used for eating, even if you are left-handed. It is considered unclean.
- Wait until you are served. Never attempt to help yourself. Your right hand, with which you are eating, will leave the serving spoon sticky. And you mustn't touch it with your left hand.
- Never offer anyone food from your thali, even if it is in one of the little bowls and you haven't touched it.
- All the food that is placed on your thali becomes jutha. There is no precise English equivalent of jutha. I suppose 'polluted' comes closest in meaning.

I am a big fan of Indian food, and since you will be living in India, the best way to experience the country's culture is by interacting with locals and through local gastronomy. You may have to adapt to the spices but trying out the different types of regional cuisine India has to offer will be a great adventure and certainly an enriching experience.

Please email your business etiquette queries to etiquetteconsultants@hotmail.com names of senders will not be published.

CIO turned artist brings life to glass painting

IT may seem unexpected for somebody who has been in the computer world for more than half his life to embrace a totally different interest—painting.

We generally think of computer professionals as "nerdy" or probable "hackers" and would do nothing more than tinker with keyboards. But this is not so in the case of Marking Que.

Mark Que is presently the chief information officer of a major real estate company by day. But at night and on weekends, he is an artist—having spent most of his spare time outside his profession (his "bread and butter," he emphasizes) in drawing and painting. As a CIO in the corporate world, he plans and implements automation projects for the company. Although as an artist, he creates visually fascinating images—alone in his studio.

He wanted to pursue a degree in Fine Arts. But his ever-practical businessman-father told him that "there's no money in Fine Arts." Upon his father's admonition, he went on instead to take up BS Management Engineering. Although his studies became a priority considering the demands of the course, his love for arts continued. In his spare time, he joined a group of student artists who met regularly to paint. His first taste of public appreciation for his art came in the form of winning first place in the poster making contest with the theme "Pagkabuhay" sponsored by his alma mater during his junior year in college. He beat other contestants including those from the Humanities and Fine Arts Departments.

MARK Que is a techie by day and a creator by night.

Systems analyst

After graduating from college, he worked as a computer programmer and moved on to become systems analyst. He continued to move up the corporate ladder and eventually became chief information officer. But through the years he never stopped his love for painting. He tried various media—charcoal, pastel, watercolor, acrylic and oil on canvas. But sometime in 1999, in his constant search for fresh painting ideas, he recalled having painted a small glass panel using watercolor during his high school days. His fascination with glass structures and passion for painting brought him to the Internet, where he researched on glass painting. This started his "love affair" with glass painting. The glass structures then became his canvas. So what other artists normally do with paper or canvas, he does it with any glass material.

Time-consuming

Armed with his newfound discovery, he embarked on a passionate pursuit of glass painting. Initially, he realized that painting on a glass structure is not as easy as painting on paper or canvas. For one, it is three-dimensional, has a very smooth surface and sometimes has a shape that is irregular. This means that there is a tendency for the paint to drop and roll down. Unless the artist intentionally wants a water dripping effect (like some of Que's paintings), he has to avoid this because some parts might get easily blotted. This is also the reason why sometimes he has to hold the glass piece with one hand and do the painting with the other hand. And this could go on for hours.

Glass paints dry up much faster than other types of paints. So the artist would have to spend a rather time-consuming effort of cleaning the glass surface just to erase the paint if he commits a mistake or later decides to enhance the color. Due to the transparent nature of glass paints, one cannot simply overlap it with new colors. But in spite of these minor hitches, he decided to specialize in glass painting.

He now uses various types of glass painting materials—water-based and non-water-based, opaque or transparent, outliners of various colors. Not wanting to be limited by these materials, he mixes and matches them to come up with special metallic effects on his creation. He also uses unconventional art materials such as sand, marbles, metal and plastic beads to create dramatic yet realistic effects on his paintings. Aside from using plain paintbrushes, he also uses sponge to create mottled effects. Over the years, he has mastered various techniques to produce effects such as splattering, dribbling and embellishing on his pieces. With these, he has created some of the most beautiful glass art pieces.

He has a wide range of subjects—from nature to abstract to surrealism. His paintings are characterized by vibrant colors and designs. Just by looking at a glass item, he could immediately visualize the subject to be painted. For instance, when he saw the curved glass vase (as shown in the picture), he right away related the curves to the waves of the sea. By the time he paid for the glass vase, he already knew that he would paint the beauty of the underwater world. And "Sea Beauty 1" was born. Ditto for the 12" goblet, which he saw as a significant vessel to hold whatever love lost between two lovers. Henceforth, the piece entitled "After the Loving."

Que joined well known Filipino artists like Malang, Lino Severino, Toch Arellano and others in an exhibit sponsored by Alliance Biblical Seminary at the SSS Art Gallery. During the said exhibit, one of his glass paintings entitled "Dalagang Gubat" was donated to the SSS art collections.

During the SSS Art Gallery exhibit, the owner of Village Art Gallery in Alabang Town Center chanced upon the attractive glass paintings and invited Mark to his gallery. Village Art Gallery is where some of Mark's creations are now on display.

At the moment, Mark Que enjoys the best of both worlds—a careen in information technology and possibly a blooming career in art. He further believes that although these are two different fields, they have one thing in common—creativity, which is an essential ingredient to succeed in any area one sets his eyes on.

The changing course of rural banking

From page B2-2

judge the effectiveness of management. Does the bank follow a disclosure system which prevent inappropriate relationship-based practices and protects minority shareholders and depositors?

While market forces will eventually drive companies to improve their governance practices, bank regulators may yet have to require a little more intrusive standards so that banks can accelerate corporate governance reforms amidst the ever-shifting fortune in business. The Basel Committee guidelines are useful international benchmarks to go by.

Anticipating the future

Obviously, the financial world has always been in a constant state of change. It is getting increasingly complex that banking processes—be they strategic, tactical or operational—have to undergo reengineering to achieve business goals. And the rural banking industry can hardly ignore this reality without the risk of being left behind.

The inexorable march of globalization, for one, is opening up a vast new frontier. It is leading the industry into new processes and into a kind of darwinian banking which could mean survival of the fittest. And the RBs should not necessarily be the endangered specie in a scenario where technology and network count a lot. Past experience has its lessons loud and clear to remind and alert the industry of market changes, and for its leaders, to secure its future now.

It would not be surprising therefore if the RBs, in a desire to remain as a viable component of the financial system, would push and hasten the season for more mergers and/or consolidations. This appears to be the more promising option to stay and matter in a game which is fast moving into the big league.... which should provide the opportunity for pooling of resources, for sharing of systems, for portfolio diversification, and for addressing over-capacity and/or undercapitalization. Given the current number of RB head offices of 790, down from a peak of 1063 in 1991, offset only by the increasing number of branches from 182 to 1034, it would not be far-fetched to think of a future when the industry would metamorphose into unified regional structures, (revolving around a handful super-rural banks or regional banks with branches and/or affiliates at grass root level)..... a probable interim step towards a national union of the likes of Netherlands' Rabobank. And this won't be wishful thinking if we believe that the instinct of survival knows no impossibility.

Indeed, the banking world is no longer for those who believe in the past. It is for those who believe in the future and who prepares in anticipation. What will happen next can be within our control. As they say, "the future has in store exactly what we have placed in store for the future."

(The author is senior vice president of Land Bank of the Philippines. Feedback at mapsec@globenet.com.ph.)

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Tips on how to deal with people and how to act in India

GOODNESS GRACES

Lia S. Bernardo

Q: I am a practicing ophthalmologist here in Manila and I am planning to sub-specialize for 15 months in Hyderabad, India. I would like to know if you can give me an idea on how to deal with the people there and what to expect when I get there. I have browsed on Lonely Planet India but it provided little information on person to person dealings.

A: Congratulations. You will be living in a country that has a very rich culture and a wealth of traditions. You will learn your profession as well as enrich yourself with an experience which you will take with you forever. As luck would have it, my brother was in fact in a business conference in India, as such, aside from research I can share with you a little bit of his experience.

- There are more than fourteen major and three hundred minor languages spoken in India. The official languages are English and Hindi. English is widely used in business, politics and education.
- Majority of the people in India are Hindu, while Muslims and Christians are the minority.
- Titles are very important. Always use professional titles.
- Business lunches are preferred to dinners. Hindus do not eat beef and Muslims do not eat pork.
- The head is considered the seat of the soul. Never touch someone else's head, not even to pat the hair of a child.
- Never point your feet at a person. Feet are considered unclean. If your shoes or feet touch another person, apologize.
- Gifts are not opened in the presence of the giver. If you receive a wrapped gift, set it aside until the giver leaves.
- Men are generally expected to wear a suit and tie for business, although the jacket may be removed in the summer. Women should wear conservative dresses or pantsuits.
- When dressing casual, short-sleeved shirts and long pants are preferred for men; shorts are acceptable only when exercising. Women must keep their upper arms, chest, back, and legs covered at all times.
- Interestingly enough, Cows roam freely around India. Cows are considered sacred by Hindus. The use of leather products including belts or handbags may be considered offensive, especially in temples. Although most Indians I have spoken to say it is perfectly acceptable to wear leather products, I would avoid it nonetheless just so that you do not risk offending anyone.
- When establishing business contacts, aim for those in the highest position of authority since decisions are made only at this level.
- Indians appreciate punctuality but don't always practice it themselves. Keep your schedule flexible enough for last-minute rescheduling of meetings.
- Although they usually do not make decisions, middle managers do have some influence. A middle manager on your side can forward your proposal. Often, they are more accessible and are usually willing to meet at any time of the day.
- Indian executives prefer late morning or early afternoon appointments, between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- Conversation is considered an "art form" here; people will put a lot of time and effort into a discussion. This does not mean, however, that you should feel the need to "bare your soul."
- Indians tend to be enthusiastic about discussing politics and religion. They enjoy opinionated conversations and don't necessarily want to hear only bland pleasantries from a foreign guest. Nevertheless, refrain from tackling these controversial subjects unless you are well-informed. As always, my advice would be letting Indians educate you themselves about their rich culture, history and religion. This makes for very interesting conversation. They do the talking, you listen and absorb, it works everytime.
- Never be afraid to ask for advice. Once you have made friends with Indians, ask for help and guidance on do's and don'ts when in their country. Remember that these are general guidelines, your local friends will be able to guide you through the specifics.

Welcome topics of conversation

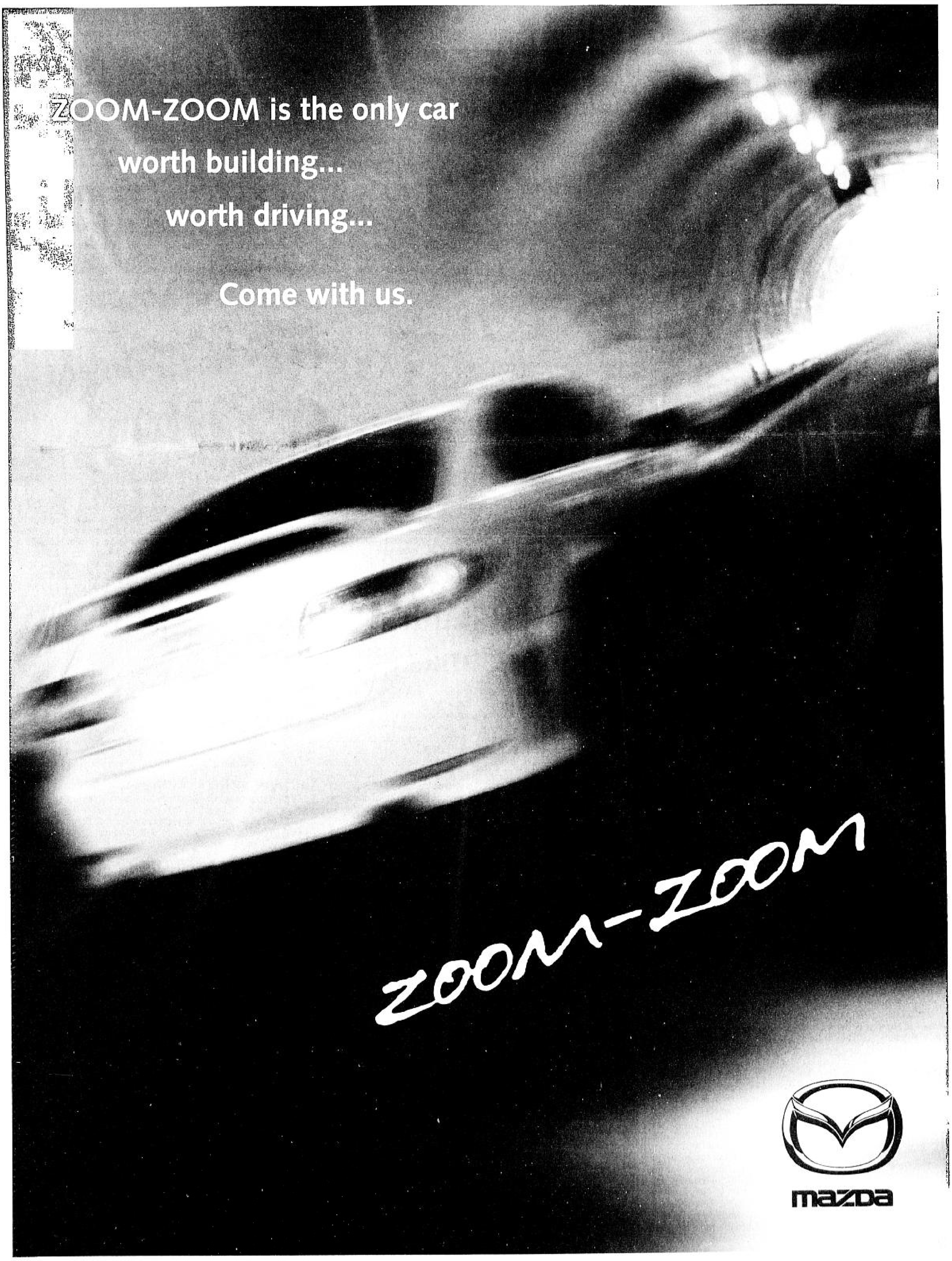
- Indian traditions
- foreign countries
- other people
- families
- cricket
- politics (if you know what you're talking about)
- religion (if you know what you're talking about)

Topics to avoid

- personal matters
- India's military spending
- poverty in India
- the significant amount foreign aid India receives

At some local restaurants you may be surprised to find people eating with their fingers. Of course up scale restaurants especially at hotels will offer utensils,

GOODNESS/ B2-4



People, Events & Products

E-mail: pr_pep@inquirer.com.ph
aespinosa@inquirer.com.ph

Editor **Aries Espinosa**

Holiday shopping at 0% interest

IN THE spirit of the Yuletide season, Citibank, the country's largest foreign bank, lets cardholders enjoy 0-percent interest on the best appliance installment deals in town at over 100 participating merchants nationwide.

Simply whip out your Citibank credit card and enjoy 0-percent installment deals on all items in the store. This 0-percent interest promo offer has been extended until Dec. 31 to give cardholders the extra financial flexibility and convenience, which comes handy especially this Christmas season.

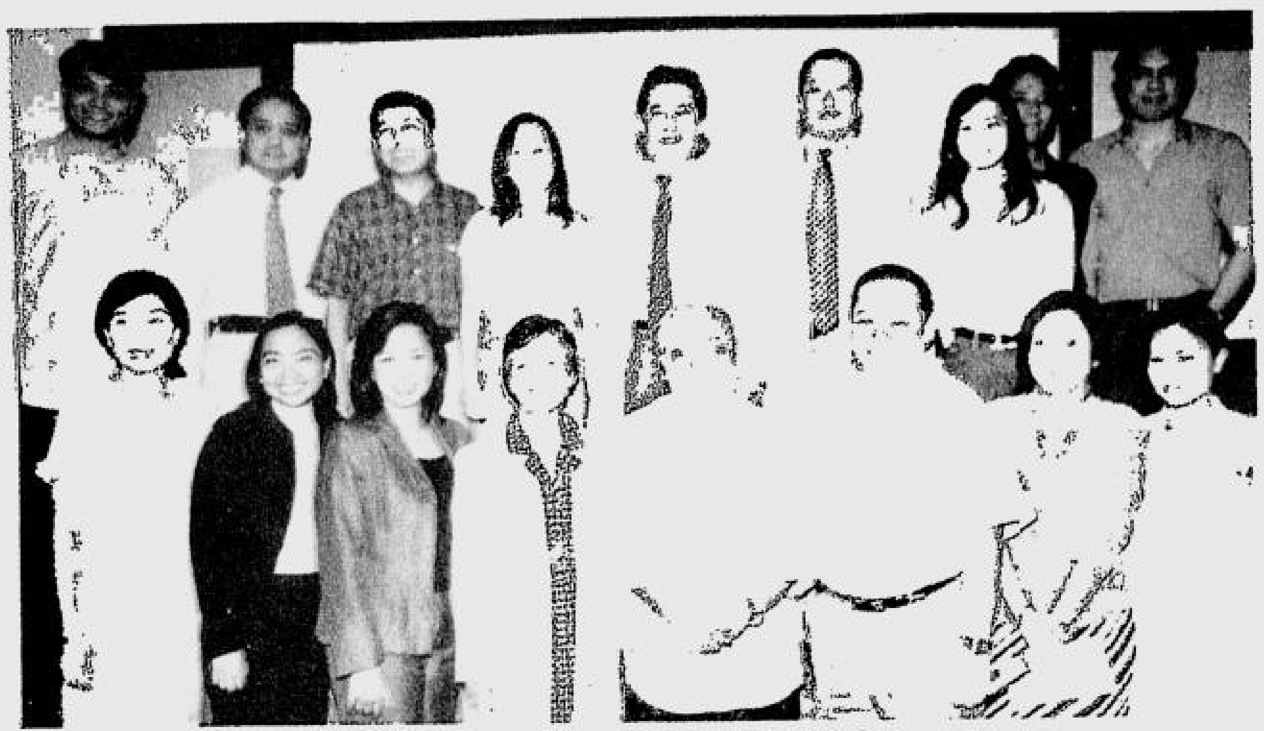
Choose any item that you want and enjoy the confidence of purchasing it now and settling the bill later over equal monthly installments at no interest. So go and treat yourself to a 49-inch flat TV, a top-of-the-line home entertainment system, or upgrade your computer or get the latest electronic gadgets and pay for your bill in as long as 12 equal monthly installments at absolutely 0-percent interest. To ensure you enjoy 0-percent on your PayLite purchase, you need to pay your outstanding balance in full for the duration of the PayLite term.

For your appliance and furniture needs, visit the SM Appliance Center, Abenson, Home Plus, Avid Sony, AV Surfer, Best Brands, Aiwa, Western, Ambiance One, Ariston, Anson Emporium, Automatic Appliances, Sogo, Blims, 5th Avenue, Ambassador, True Value, Listening in Style, D Cinema in Style, Golden Sound and Listening Room. For your computer and tech requirements, head to Electroworld, Columbia Computers, Silicon Valley, PC Express, The Computer Authority, Villman, Complink, Compex and Dataview Computers.

For more details, call the 24-hour CitiPhone at 995-9999 or log on to www.citibank.com.ph.

FIRST LIFE'S LIFE VALUES 1ST PHOTO TILT

First Guarantee Life Assurance Co Inc (First Life) celebrated its 44th founding anniversary with the award ceremony for the winners in the recently concluded Life Values 1st photo contest and exhibit at the Filipinas Heritage Library. Launched for the first time in September, the competition engaged amateur and professional photographers in Metro Manila/NCR in a quest for the image that would best depict Filipino family values and traditions that are sustained by life insurance. Judging of the 280 entries from 76 participants was held Oct. 28 at the First Life head office. First Life presented cash and trophies to the best 5 photos, plus cameras from Canon Marketing (Philippines) Inc. The awarding Nov. 27 was followed by the formal opening of the exhibit that ran until Dec. 4. Shown leading the awarding and ribbon-cutting ceremony of the Life Values 1st photo contest and exhibit at the Filipinas Heritage Library were (from right) First Life president and CEO Peter Coyiuto, Canon executive vice president and COO Ramon Arteficio, and Federation of Philippine Photographers Foundation (FPPF) representative Francis Rivera. Right photo shows one of the contest's winning images, Samuel de Leon's 'Guiding Light'



MSD, UST HOSPITAL INTRODUCE VIRTUAL GRAND ROUNDS

Merck Sharp & Dohme (MSD), through its MSD Resource Centers and in collaboration with the University of Santo Tomas Hospital (USTH), recently launched a new service to the medical community, called the MRC Virtual Grand Rounds (MVGR). The MVGR is a NetMeeting-enabled facility-provided at the 9 MSD Resource Centers (MRCs) located nationwide-where doctors can interact online with fellow physicians from different locations in the country. The recent launch gathered doctors (shown) who shared opinions on the management of the case titled 'The Conundrum of Pott's'. It was chaired by Dr. Sandra Navarra, with the participation of doctor panelists. This first MVGR was conducted in the MRCs at the University of Santo Tomas Hospital, Philippine General Hospital, Philippine Heart Center, Makati Medical Center, Philippine Orthopedic Center, Davao Doctors Hospital, and Batangas. For more inquiries regarding the MVGR, call Cat Dallarte, MRC services manager, or Marge Panizales, USTH MRC officer, at 732-1338. UST Hospital's Dr. Tito Torralba (front row, 4th from right) and MSD business unit director Dr. Beaver Tamesis (3rd from right) led the successful launch.

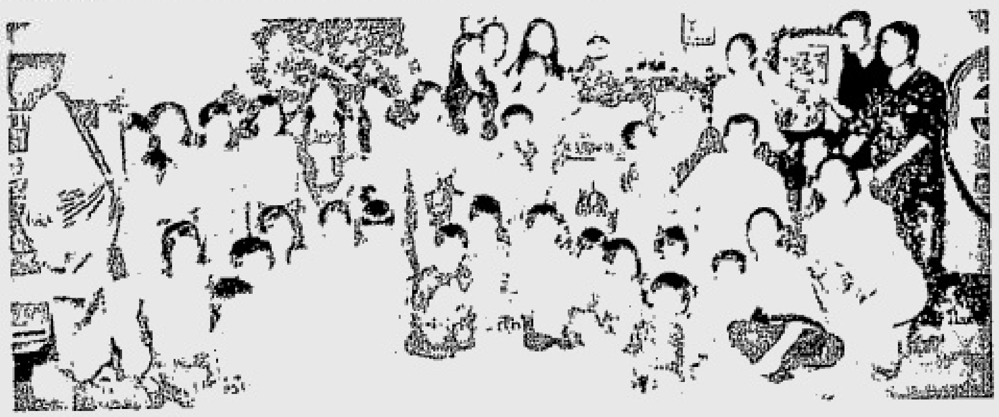
New Horizons' Holiday promo

IN THE spirit of sharing this Holiday season, New Horizons Computer Learning Centers Philippines is promoting savings and togetherness for you, your family, relatives, colleagues, associates, co-workers and friends. Benefit from the Holiday Bonus Promo, which is ongoing until Jan. 15, 2004.

Enroll in its scheduled courses with the 2 Plus 1 bonus promo. Pay for two persons and a third person can attend the same course at no cost. And what's more, gather additional New Horizons' windfall of bonuses in the Macromedia Club's 1 Plus 1 promo. Get two memberships for one single price. Finally, get 30 percent off on New Horizons' eLearning. Study 24/7 in a Web-based platform using New Horizons Integrated Learning Manager.

New Horizons Philippines specializes in infrastructure solutions, desktop applications, development solutions, database management, and soft skills, and has also launched technical education programs that include non-certified Microsoft technical courses. Currently, its technical offerings include Macromedia, Adobe, Lotus, Java, and Comp Tia courses. New Horizons-Philippines brings to the market diverse training programs, large selections of course offerings, the flexibility and adaptability in meeting customer requirements, and the ability to innovate and promote various products.

For more details about New Horizons and its Holiday promo, call 840-5000 or 635-4466, or e-mail Sales.Makati@newhorizons.com or Sales.Ortigas@newhorizons.com.ph.New Horizons has class schedules on weekdays, weeknights and weekends.



ALABANG JAYCEES, COCA-COLA BRING CHRISTMAS JOY

30 children ages 5 to 8 belonging to poor families in various parts of Metro Manila were treated to a day of fun and merrymaking as the Alabang Jaycees and associates of the Coca-Cola external affairs department brought them to the Coca-Cola Pavilion in Santa Rosa, Laguna. At the Coke Pavilion, the children saw various presentations about the soft drink, and together with their 'kuyas' and 'ates' of the Alabang Jaycees, they were given a short tour of the place. After their activities, the Jaycees treated the children to a hearty lunch. To cap the tour of the museum, the children were each given a gift pack by the pavilion's very own Santa Claus. Shown are the kids posing with the Alabang Jaycees led by president Oscar Coscolluela, Mr. Clown and Santa Claus with the Coke Pavilion's Christmas display as background.

Workshop on balloon-making set Dec. 30

THE ONTARIO Center for Skills an Livelihood will conduct a seminar and workshop on Dec. 30, Tuesday, on how to make decorative balloons the easy way at the training hall of the University of the Philippines Institute of Small Enterprises, 2nd floor Virata Hall, Jacinto Street, UP Campus, Diliman, Quezon City from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Topics to be discussed are basic techniques on balloon artworks, producing high-quality balloons, concepts in balloon printing and decorating, twisting, florals, chandeliers, for weddings, birthdays, party needs, anniversaries, Valentine's Day, and other occasions.

Participants will be given materials and a certificate of training. For reservations, call Josie at 704-1763, 338-6304 or 0917-6008140. Tess Natividad is the trainer and an expert balloonist.

Product FILES

Connoisseur coffee minus the hype

TWO ALL-time favorites, the cappuccino and the café latte

THE AROMA hits your nostrils with a euphoric bang while the rich flavor kicks in your mouth like a thousand little fingers caressing your palate. By the time you emptied your cup, you are convinced that your visit to the joint isn't going to be your last. Beanhoppers Coffee is not just another company jumping on the coffee house business bandwagon.

Owned and operated by Coffee Handlers Inc, its string of stores was in existence for five years and already had a cult following among coffee lovers. Beanhoppers is a labor of love and was born out of sheer passion for good coffee, a thing that easily reflects on the warm and personal service it bestows on its patrons. Co-owner Lorie Pizana says the first Beanhoppers branch was built in FBR Arcade, Loyola Heights, Quezon City back in 1998.

The café has an array of products that will satisfy every coffee lovers' craving like ice blended coffee, gourmet coffee and coffee as dessert. All time favorites are the Café Mocha, Café Latte, Cappuccino and Frappio. After years of existence, Beanhoppers has built additional branches that cater to hip and upwardly mobile crowd. Its other branches are located at Robinsons Place, Novaliches, Sgt. Esguerra Street, Quezon City, SM Southmall; Ayala Center, Cebu, Crossroads Mall, Cebu and J. Llorente Street, Cebu. Upcoming branches will be in SM Marilao, New Greenfields Edsa Central Mall and Elizabeth Mall in Cebu.

Beanhoppers is inviting entrepreneurs to join in the mission of spreading the gospel of good coffee. Interested parties can get an official franchise application form at Beanhoppers Coffee, Ground Level, Robinsons Place Novaliches. Inquiries will also be entertained at 930-1690, 0926-2286834 and 0917-5140008.

East West Bank's best Christmas gift

THIS Christmas season is made even more exciting with the launch of East West Bank's Fone 'n' Flights promo. Do you want to fly with your special someone to Singapore, Bangkok or Pearl Farm in Davao for free? How about getting a free Smart cell phone this Christmas? You can enjoy these travel and phone perks while watching your investments grow only at East West Bank.

Ongoing until Feb. 27, 2004, the Fones & Flights promo is open to all new and existing individual savings accounts depositors of East West Bank. Qualified East West Bank account holders are entitled to join the raffle draw for a chance to win free trips for two. The trip includes roundtrip plane tickets, food and hotel accommodation, city tour and pocket money.

By simply opening and/or maintaining required deposit balances in East West Bank's savings or checking accounts, one can take home the latest cell phone models (Nokia 7210, Nokia 3100, Smart Amazing Phone, Nokia 7650, Ericsson T610, Nokia 6220, Nokia 6600 and Ericsson T610) for free. The free unit comes with a Smart 64K SuperSIM, a Smart Money Card and a Smart Gold Plan covered by a contract for 18 or 24 months.

For depositors who do not wish to avail themselves of the free phone, they can still join the raffle by just maintaining a minimum P15,000 in their savings account for at least six months.

Raffle draw will be held on March 15, 2004 at the East West Bank head office. For inquiries on the Fone & Flights promo, call East West Bank's customer hotline 8ACCESS (822-2377).

POWER-PACKED EVENT SHOWCASES MALAMPAYA

DOE Secretary Vincent Perez (2nd from left) visited the Malampaya Virtual Exhibit at Power Trends 2003 accompanied by (from left) Philippine National Oil Company-Exploration Corp president and CEO Rufino Bomasang, ChevronTexaco corporate services head Rachel Sta. Maria and joined by National Power Corp president Rogelio Murga (right). The event is the 4th International Exhibition on Current and Alternative Sources of Energy for a Clean Environment held at the World Trade Center in Pasay City. Power Trends 2003 highlighted the advent of natural gas as the country's most viable source of clean energy. The Malampaya Gas to Power Project is a joint venture of the DOE, Shell Philippines Exploration BV (as developer and operator), ChevronTexaco Malampaya LLC and the PNOC-EC.

Bits & Clips

2 for the price of 1

ON DEC. 31 and Jan 1, The Pearl Manila Hotel's Seven Seas Café and Oyster Bar treats you and your loved ones to a special dinner for two for the price of P600 net only. Choose from its Stuffed Porkloin, Saint Nicolas or Grilled Chateaubriand of Beef for main courses. Both set meals come with soup, salad, vegetable sidings, rice or potato croquette, dessert, coffee or tea and a glass of red wine. Truly tempting, truly merry, truly Pearl Manila. For reservations, call 400-0088 local 5011. The Pearl Manila is managed with distinction by Genesis Hotels and Resorts.

Purple Panthers' 52nd year

THE PURPLE Panthers of the Ateneo de San Pablo will celebrate its 52nd anniversary on Dec. 30 at Roños Place, Lakeside Park, San Pablo City. The Class '57 headed by lawyer Vic Joyas is this year's host. For more information, call Hermie Camaya (049) 561-1179, Gary Hernandez (049) 561-1073 and Buddy Peñalosa (049) 562-3476.

Change into a beauty with Pond's

MAKE the change to a more beautiful and confident you as Pond's brings you the Pond's Beauty Changeover Station mall tour. Learn about beauty and skin care that's right for your teen skin as Pond's Institute dermatologists and beauty consultants visit your favorite malls and help you answer your most pressing skin care questions. Teenage girls will be able to try the new Pond's Oil and Blemish Control Beauty Powder, a 5-in-1 beauty powder, at the sampling section and see for themselves how the beauty powder is best suited for their changing skin needs. The Pond's Beauty Changeover Station also features an interactive personality quiz to help teenage girls determine their best characteristics. The Pond's Beauty Changeover Station mall tour will run from mid-October to early January.

Beauty queen in Manila

MISCHIEL Solis-Ipock is the first and only double-titled beauty queen of the Filipino community in the United Kingdom. Crowned 1987 Miss Philippines UK and 1997 Mrs Philippines UK, she also won the coveted crown of Miss Luzon Charity UK in 1986 and included as one of the finest models for Asean Net UK. Now, Mischiel and the sensational Sampaguita Performing Group will be performing live at the Dreamscape Robinsons Galleria on Dec. 29, SM Megamall on Dec. 30, SM North Edsa on Dec. 31 and a grand finale at Enchanted Kingdom on Jan. 1. For ticket inquiries, call Candid Hotline at 724-4832.

A 'balikbayan' welcome from Power Plant

BALIKBAYANS are in for a treat at the Power Plant Mall at Rockwell Center this Christmas Holiday season. All balikbayans have to do is visit the Power Plant Mall at Rockwell Center and present their passports at the Balikbayan Center located within the Manansala model unit at the Mall's ground floor, North Court. Upon validation, they may claim their free gift at designated Power Plant Mall establishments. Freebies range from favorite Filipino delicacies to free family souvenir photos plus various gift certificates from select Power Plant stores. The balikbayan promo runs through Christmas and the new year.

Personalize a big gift list

WITH everybody on your shopping gift list, getting presents that speak to your family members and friends personally can be a Herculean task. If there are so many people you intend to buy gifts for, chances are high you'll end up with frazzled nerves and a drained energy. Choosing the right quality gifts to express gratitude and respect, or serve as thoughtful gestures, can be a breeze-if you know where to get them.

One way to go about it in this season of gift-giving is to have your gifts personalized by an expert. This will turn a generic gift into something special and personal. You can have your friends' colleagues', or family members' names, or a special message engraved, etched, or embroidered on your selected gifts-at Made for U. This is a company with the capability to design and produce quality original custom creations and giveaways suited for office party favors, awards during special events and gifts you can proudly give to people who matter to you this Holiday season and all year round.

A one-stop-shop of creative solutions especially designed for customers with very exacting standards and specifications, Made for U is a young and innovative company that offers a full range of services. These range from unique gift items, communication media, exclusive awards, souvenirs, branding accessories, and commemorative memorabilia to election paraphernalia. Made for U's key strength lies in a combination of attentive customer service and the utilization of the most updated technology to create quality customized gifts and paraphernalia.

To avail yourself of Made for U's embroidery, etching, engraving, stamping, printing, weaving, and other related services, the quality-oriented one-stop specialty store may be found at the upper ground floor of SM Southmall, Almanza, Las Pinas City; level 2, Glorietta 4, Ayala Center, Makati City, and level 2 of Ayala Center Cebu, Cebu Business Park, Cebu City. Among Made for U's best-selling items as far as corporate clients in Metro Manila are concerned are sport shirts, T-shirts and baseball caps.

Made for U uses modern equipment like its 15-color embroidery machines. It can also do photographic etching (intricate markings) on glasses, which its competitors are not capable of.

Made for U acknowledged that customer requirements are so myriad, but the company offers a reasonably priced selection to satisfy, providing an unbeatable punch to gifts, tokens, souvenirs, memorabilia and paraphernalia suited for celebrating special efforts or occasions.

Whether your thoughts are along the lines of customized gift items like picture frames, vases, bottles, jars or stuffed toys; or run the gamut from desktop penholders, cardholders, pens, ad cubes to stylized dining ware like drinking glasses, mugs, plates or placemats, or uniquely printed or embroidered fashion accessories that include shirts, caps, bags, and many more. Made for U can personalize your gifts any way you choose.

Made for U's client portfolio includes the most reputable names in their fields, representing varied industries ranging from embassies and hotels to automotive firms, insurance companies, banks, sports supply stores, law offices, and some of the top food and beverage and consumer goods firms in the country.

For inquiries about superior quality corporate gifts and items, call Made for U at 913-4776, or e-mail info@madeforu.biz.

PETROSAVER, THE PERFECT OIL FILTRATION SYSTEM

Petrosaver (Perfect Filtration System) has been declared by its manufacturers as the answer to frequent engine oil change. It has been reported to decrease engine oil consumption, protects oil additives, and, most importantly, extends the life of the car engine. The logic behind this claim is Petrosaver's ability to eliminate both solid and liquid contaminants that causes thermal engine oil breakdown. This is achieved via the 1-micron-size filtration, resulting to cleaner engine oils with better viscosity. Eco-tech International Trading Inc is the exclusive distributor of the Petrosaver PFS. The company recently launched Petrosaver at the Mandarin Oriental Makati City, and also participated in an exhibit promoting the Clean Air Act held at the SM Megamall, Megatrade Hall Nov. 21 to 23. Shown at the exhibit are (from left) Russiel Ferareza, sales executive, Edna Banez, executive secretary, DOTC's Gen. Robert Lastimoso, Sam Hamdan, marketing director, and Chris Malasmas, marketing officer. For inquiries, visit Eco-Tech International Trading Inc at Unit-B, 32/F Rufino Pacific Tower Building, Ayala Avenue, Makati, or call 811-0000, 811-3949, 811-3449, 811-3450 or fax 811-1139.

3 books for Christmas launched

THREE new Filipiniana tomes-"Parol Christmas Star Lantern", "Pabalat Pastillas Wrappers" and "Tahanan A House Reborn"-were officially launched in Manila Dec. 3 at the Philippine Heritage Library, sponsored by The Plaza, Unilever Philippines and the Department of Tourism.

The event was graced by guests of honor Dr. Jaime Laya, Howard and Cristina Belton, and Jose L. Santos' proxy Joey Santos.

Other guests included Jojo and Baby Bunag, Marla Yotoko Chorengel, Mindy Abad Santos-Gana, Hermie and Nina Garcia, Bro. Andrew Gonzalez, Sony Lopez-Gonzalez, Gene Gonzalez, Allan Isaac, Rupert and Tina Jacinto, Llita Logarta, Bobby and Nancy Lumen, Chito Macapagal, Jojie Mayshle, Rene Nieva, Nonon and Tony Padilla, Libertito and Linda Pelayo, Gilbert Perez, Donnie Ramirez, Millie Reyes, Joey San Juan, Marietta Santos, Noel and Lally Trinidad, Cindy Velez, Renan and Robert Prado, Gaby Gonzalez SJ, Vini Luciano, Maite Quesada, Jay-jay Malixi, Rene Orayani, Puring Sugcang, Jay-jay and Mylene Gana, Bonjin Bolinao, and Thelma Tolentino.

Those seen enjoying the books were Caloy Abrera, Angie Salazar, Pitoy Moreno, Minyong Ordonez, Bobby Caballero, Tony Protacio, Greg Alvior, Gil Portes, Linda Panlilio, Carmen Padilla, Marcelita Churchill, Christine Laumond, Rosalinda Roman, Nelson Navarro, Cecil Onrubia-Jacinto, Sedfrey Ordonez, Noni Agcaili, Priscy Teehankee-Gamboa, Roy Gonzalez, Ping Valencia, Bob Zozobrado, Ramon Bilbao, Carlos and Dodit Reyes, Tessie Reyes, Liza de la Fuente-Castaneda, Ato and Ate Gonzalez, Javier Galvan, Carlos Madrid, Ben Gozon, Priscilla Victa, Marge Evasco, and Alex and Didi Struijk.

The three titles published by Duende Publishing are authored by New York-based writer columnist Reynaldo Gamboa Alejandro, who flew in from the Big Apple for the occasion, and Vicente Roman S. Santos, book author, antiquarian and gentleman farmer.

"Parol Christmas Star Lantern" is the first of the "Artes Populares: Likhang Sining ng Bayan Series". This tome traces the history, development and popularity of the parol from the pignatta of Renaissance Italy to today's kaleidoscopic Philippine Christmas lantern.

The second volume of the Series is "Pabalat Pastillas Wrappers" tracing the history and development of the dying art, pabalat, from Chinese paper cuts, papel picado of Mexico to the well-known San Miguel, Bulacan tradition of wrapping sweets.

"Tahanan A House Reborn" presents the 1917 Santos-Andres house in Navotas, its untold tales and its remounting in Antipolo. The book also shares the history of the coastal fishing town of Navotas, the biography of the patriarch and family recipes kept secret till now.

These books were then launched in New York at the United Nations on Dec. 12 by the UNSRC Philippine Cultural Society, headed by Teresa Martinez and Nicanor Feliciano, and coordinated by Filipina Tatlonghari. The Madrid launch will be today, Dec. 29.

The prolific tandem of Ronnie Alejandro and Mike Santos have lined up future exciting Filipiniana titles such as "Wow! Ang Sarap! The Best of Philippine Regional Cuisine," "Catanduanes The Hidden Cove", "A Fish Called Bangus", "Mango the Golden Fruit", "Antipolo the Beautiful", "Bukidnon the Beautiful", "Idiay Ili Mi Ilocos Sur the Beautiful", "Bagong Bayani the Global Filipinos", "Manila Bay the Crossroads of Asia," "Manila Then and Now", "Coconut the Tree of Life", and "Manika Philippine Doll."

HONORS FOR RP

The Philippine delegation garnered silver and bronze awards in the recent International Math Competition held in Thailand. Team A won the Silver Award Team Category, while Teams B, C and D won the Bronze Awards Team Category. Shown are jubilant member contestants of Team A who also won medals in the Individual Category. Shown, from left, are Anthony Ang, team leader (MTG), Carlo Francisco Adajar of Paref Southridge School for Boys (silver), Chiara Rosario Lanuza of Poveda Learning Centre (bronze), Nellie Margaret Chua of Chiang Kai Shek College (silver), Minerva Bianca Avecilla of St. Benedict College (bronze). Mathematics Trainers Guild vice president Reclulda P. Villame, deputy team leader. The Philippine participation was made possible by MTG.

A healthy Yuletide from HealthToday

DECEMBER is the season to be jolly. But with all the late night partying, endless dinners, traffic jams and last-minute shopping, this merry month could easily turn stressful-leaving us physically and mentally drained. In this month's issue of HealthToday, learn how you can beat the holiday blues and stress.

Exercising and maintaining a healthy diet during the Yuletide season is tough. Read "Fitting Fitness into Christmas" and find out how easy it can be.

The jolly holidays can be a nightmare for mothers. In "Supermoms and the Nightmare Before Christmas", multitasking moms show us how to keep stress at bay during the Holidays.

Preparing for the baby and the Holidays can stress any expectant mom. Try the 12 ways to a stress-free, pregnant Holiday.

Bottoms up may mean health down. Read "Happy, Unhealthy Hour" and find out the perils of overindulging in alcohol.

Check out our guide to over-the-counter pain relievers and make "Pain, Pain Go Away". Read what experts have to say in strengthening family ties. Discover how your dermatologist can help you receive the perfect gifts for your skin.

On the cover, newlyweds Donita Rose and Eric Villarama tell us about their love-and-fun-filled marriage.

It's a merry, healthful December issue of HealthToday, so get your copy now. HealthTodayis available in bookstores, newsstands and retail outlets nationwide. For subscription inquiries, call 886-0333 local 112, or e-mail enquiry@medimedia.com.ph.

PHILIPS TV AND MORE AT BLIMS EXHIBIT

Philips, Europe's No. 1 consumer electronics company recently sponsored the 'Blims In-Fusion' exhibit at the Glorietta Activity Center. The activity center was arranged in a lifestyle set-up featuring home interior design suggestions that showcased the finest furniture and home décor from Blims and Simmons USA complemented by Philips home entertainment products such as Projection and Pixel Plasma TVs, DVD home theater systems, and vOOx mini hi-fi components. Visitors also enjoyed special promos for both Philips and Blims products. Shown from left are Philips business development manager Phillip Trapaga, Philips account manager Raymond Igao, Blims marketing services manager Stephanie Salazar, and Philips Philippines president and CEO Med Mateo during the exhibit.

ProductFILES

Smileys Sandwich Cookies doubles the fun

NEW!
Smileys
NEW!
Smileys

GRAND Alphatech International Corp (Galinco) brings another exciting treat to all cookie lovers, this time with twice the fun and twice the yummy taste packed in the new Smiley's Double Cream Sandwich Cookies.

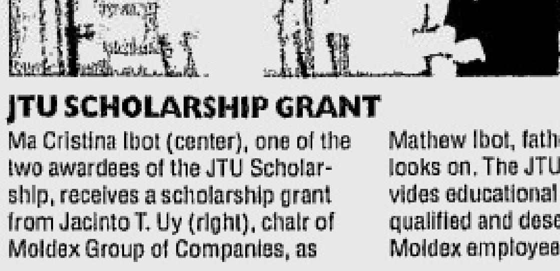
Those who constantly crave for the goodness of Smileys Sandwich Cookies will go crazy with Galinco's two new unique variants-Smileys Double Cream in Choco-Peanut flavor and Choco-Strawberry flavor.

Smileys takes the reliable goodness of chocolate and combines it with two equally loved flavors-the creaminess of peanut and the fruitiness of strawberry-swirled between two crunchy chocolate cookies. The results are double burst of exciting new flavors that are sure to leave cookie lovers wanting for more.

Smileys Sandwich Cookies also come in all-time favorites of Chocolate, Vanilla and Peanut Butter.

RP SOROPTIMISTS IN JAPAN CONFAB

Soroptimist International of the Americas (SIA) recently held the SIA 'Training the Trainors' seminar in Osaka, Japan. Newly installed federation director of SIA Tes B. Choa (left) presents a Silent Auction donation to SIA past president Donna Walker (center). Region secretary Cely C. Ng presents the SI Makati Club banner to Walker, whose club SI Chico is their Friendship Link. Choa and Ng are members of SI Makati.



JTU SCHOLARSHIP GRANT

Ma Cristina Ibot (center), one of the two awardees of the JTU Scholarship, receives a scholarship grant from Jacinto T. Uy (right), chair of Moldex Group of Companies, as Mathew Ibot, father of Cristina, looks on. The JTU Scholarship provides educational assistance to qualified and deserving children of Moldex employees.

Bits & Clips

Hankook supplies tires for Ford

FORD Motor Co has awarded South Korea's Hankook Tire Manufacturing Co Ltd a multiyear contract to supply tires for Ford's new F-150 pickup truck. Ford recently launched the 2004 version of the F-150, which the firm claims is the largest-selling personal transportation vehicle in North America. Ford projects annual sales of more than 800,000 units for the F-150. Hankook is making the tires-the DynaPro RH03 and DynaPro AT RF08, in sizes P235/75R17S and P235/70R17SXL-at its Daejeon, South Korea, factory. The contract represents Hankook's first original equipment supply deal for tires other than spares on a North American vehicle. Hankook has supplied mini-spares to Ford for the compact Focus since 1999, and recently took over the spare tire contract for Ford's Escape sport-utility vehicle. Supplying Ford should enhance the brand recognition of Hankook Tire in the global market, Cho Choong-Hwan, CEO of Hankook Tire, said. Besides Ford, Hankook Tire also sells tires to France's Renault SA, Sweden's Volvo AB and Germany's Volkswagen AG.

Mayor Ramona High Alumni reunion

ALL GRADUATES of Mayor Ramona High School (formerly Southern Institute) of Sto. Rosario, Hagonoy, Bulacan, are invited to the Alumni homecoming on Dec. 30. The event will start at 7 a.m.

Free bags from Citibank

FLASH your Citibank Clear Card or Shell-Citibank MasterCard when shopping or dining and you can bring home a free bag from Citibank and MasterCard. For a single or accumulated spend of at least P6,000 over a one-month period, Citibank Clear cardholders and Shell Citibank MasterCard members will be entitled to a stylish travel bag for free. The promo runs until Dec. 31, giving you ample time to redeem the free bag. To claim the free item, the principal cardholder must secure a free bag redemption form available in Citibank 0-percent PayLite Win What You Buy booths located in Robinsons Place Manila, Robinsons Galleria, Glorietta, Shangri-La Plaza, Alabang Town Center and Ayala Center Cebu. Complete the form and fax to 995-9065. The free bag will be delivered in two to three weeks time. For more details, call the 24-hour CitiPhone at 995-9999.

Despite gloom, growth seen for ICT industry

2004 OUTLOOK

By Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva

AN INDIAN software company is setting up shop in the Philippines next year—a development of which the country should not take lightly.

This is the first case of a big Indian firm setting up locally to study the Philippine market, according to Felipe Manalang, president of Fujitsu Philippine Inc. As a veteran in the Philippine information and communications technology (ICT) industry, Manalang is not taking this development sitting down. At least, not this time around.

The executive admitted that he had hoped for recovery in the ICT industry in 2003. Instead, he received the cruelest lesson of his career.

He had to retrench people—some have been employed with Fujitsu for years—for the first time in the 25-year history of the company.

Fujitsu Philippines announced job cuts in 2003 due to the weak United States market. Apparently, the company's offshore software business was focused on the US market, just like any other local software company.

In 2004, the software company, considered as one of the top players in the country, is going back to the drawing board to plot its next battle plan. This time, it will make sure that it would be ready to compete in a tougher global market.

Still, ICT experts are keeping the fires of hope alive as they predict that the country's ICT industry would grow next year, but not as much as it did in the past few years. Several top executives of software companies are expecting modest growth in 2004 mainly due to renewed optimism in the market, specifically in the US.

In the Philippines, however, the same executives are still edgy, what with the upcoming elections in May 2004. As one software company executive put it: "It will be a volatile market."

Technology research firm International Data Corp. (IDC) said that the Asian ICT industry excluding Japan will grow by 11 percent to $88 billion next year.

IDC attributed this to the "new growth cycle," which is expected to be on the upswing after years of "flat" growth.

Growth, IDC added, would come from three emerging markets: China, South Korea and India. These markets are growing because of an expected strong demand for consumer-related products and solutions that will be used both at home and at the office.

The ICT market in China alone is expected to grow by 18 percent to $29.4 next year.

The growing Internet population is also driving demand in these countries. At least 205 million people are expected to go online across Asia Pacific in 2004, up 22 percent from 2003.

In the Philippines, however, the ICT industry in general is expecting small- and medium-sized enterprises to bring in more business next year.

Executives from software vendors like Microsoft Corp., SAP AG and Computer Associates are all expecting modest revenue growth next year.

Software giant Microsoft has downgraded its projected revenue growth from 15 to 10 percent for fiscal year 2004, according to managing director Antonio Javier. Microsoft Philippines' fiscal year started July 2003 and ends June 2004.

The revenue growth, Javier said, is a reflection of the general perception in the local industry.

German business software firm SAP AG is also projecting 10- to 20-percent revenue growth in 2004 due to more conservative spending from large enterprise customers.

One bright spot next year for most software companies is the growing demand from small and medium enterprises next year, according to the software company.

SAP sees SMEs starting to contribute significant business to the company next year.

Large corporations like San Miguel Corp., the Gokongwei Group of Companies, Petron, and recently the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas make up the list of customers of SAP in the Philippines.

"Unlike other software companies, SAP's installed base—which represents some the largest enterprises—make up about 80 percent of our revenues. We don't see these companies slowing down, and thus expect them to turn to SAP when they expand," said Marivic Gamo, marketing manager of SAP Philippines.

On the other end, software vendor Computer Associates is keeping its projections conservative, forecasting 10 to 15 percent revenue growth for fiscal year 2004 (CA's current fiscal year ends March 2004).

"There's optimism with the recent developments in the US market. But this is being dampened by the upcoming political exercise in the Philippines. We're all speculating about what will happen next because overnight, the landscape changes," said Lysander Salcedo, country manager of Computer Associates Philippines.

Salcedo stressed that the business software vendors will be fighting over a smaller portion of the software industry pie in the country next year.

Indeed, chief information officers and IT managers of large corporations in the Philippines recently indicated that "justifying IT spending" is one of the biggest challenges next year.

In a survey conducted by the Society of IT Management Professionals from March to December 2003, the local IT managers agreed that they would have a tougher job pushing IT projects involving some investment from their organizations.

But with the renewed optimism in 2004—save for the expected turbulence caused by the upcoming national elections in May next year—the software market and the ICT industry in general can expect better prospects next year compared with 2003.

"We have continuously been living under a cloud of uncertainty for the past years. But compared with the past years, our projections today and the next year have become more modest although economists have forecast growth next year despite political uncertainties," SAP's Gamo said.

White-knuckle, frenetic gameplay

By Leo Magno

NO thanks to the Metro Manila filmfest, the Philippines was deprived the opportunity to view "The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King" on the big screen along with the rest of the world. But for those who haven't seen it yet through one of those advanced screenings in Makati, here's a little something to whet your appetite.

ROTK was shown Dec. 19 worldwide, except for some tropical country in southeast Asia composed of several thousand islands. But ROTK the video game came out earlier on Nov. 6, and it contains some footage from the film as well as almost an hour of game-exclusive dialogues.

It took me a while to finish this game, not because it's long but because some of the missions are just downright difficult. I was relieved when I read that the reviewers of Electronic Gaming Monthly also found ROTK difficult.

ROTK was developed by Electronic Arts (EA), the same guys who made "The Two Towers" video game. The two games are a big departure from "Fellowship of the Ring" which was developed by Vivendi Universal. That one simply sucked seer, but the ones developed by EA are respectable.

Of the three, however, I found ROTK to be the best (I played Fellowship on the Xbox and Two Towers and ROTK on the PS2). It ups the ante of Two Towers and makes you feel like you're playing your own version of the movie instead of just playing a video game. And since Two Towers and ROTK video games are based on the film which in turn was more or less faithful to the book, I had a good time reliving the action since I first read Tolkien's trilogy exactly 20 years ago.

At its core, ROTK is a hack-and-slash game, where you can use Aragorn's sword, Legolas' arrows, Gandalf's Glamdring, Gimli's axe or Sam's Elven blade to slice or skewer orcs or cave trolls surrounding you. It is a mission-based, third-person action game sprinkled with RPG elements since your character can level up or increase his abilities and weapon proficiency at the end of each mission. The number of experience points you use to level your character up depends on how well you play each mission.

ROTK is different from other hack-and-slash games because it is executed so well and the presentation is just so grandiose—you are placed in huge environments, attacked by hundreds of orcs and bombarded by catapults left and right. The ominous background music, the sight and sound of everything in the game—from orc grunts to Nazgul shrieks to explosions and human soldiers screaming in pain; to the sound of war drums, cannonballs whistling overhead only to boom just behind you while your controller vibrates; and the cry of steel grinding on steel or the bite of arrows piercing flesh and bone—this game makes you feel like you were actually in the battlefield.

ROTK will immerse you in white-knuckle action from start to finish as hordes of orc run after your juicy gonads. There simply is no let-up: enemies in the game are unrelenting and recovery potions are so few and thus are so precious—yesss, preciousss—you need to get each and every recovery potion to survive each mission.

In ROTK, you get to play as His Royal Ass-Kicker Aragorn, a.k.a. Strider or The Dunedan; Gandalf the Grey-Turned-White, a.k.a. Gandalf Stormcrow and Gandalf Greyhame; Pretty Legolas a.k.a. Gimli's Boy Toy; Gimli son of Gloin a.k.a. The Fire in Legolas' Loins; or Samwise Gamgee a.k.a. "Mr. Frodo, it's me—your Sam!" The characters will be playable depending on the path you choose. ROTK has branching paths: The Path of the Hobbits, The Path of the Wizard and The Path of the King. The Path of the Hobbits tells of the separate journey of Frodo and Sam. The Path of the Wizard lets you play as Gandalf, while the Path of the King lets you play as Elvis Presley. Seriously, The Path of the King let's you play as either Aragorn, Gimli or Legolas.

When I saw how the paths converged, I thought ROTK would be an easy game because there were relatively few (13) stages to clear from Helm's Deep to the Cracks of Doom. How I was mistaken.

The difficulty of this game is not so much in the slaying of enemies and trying to find enough recovery potions to stay alive. It is difficult to finish a mission because sometimes your objectives are unclear (a game design flaw), the missions are long and some are downright difficult, even on Easy Mode. In the longer missions, you have checkpoints, but if you don't clear any of them you have to repeat the whole thing over again.

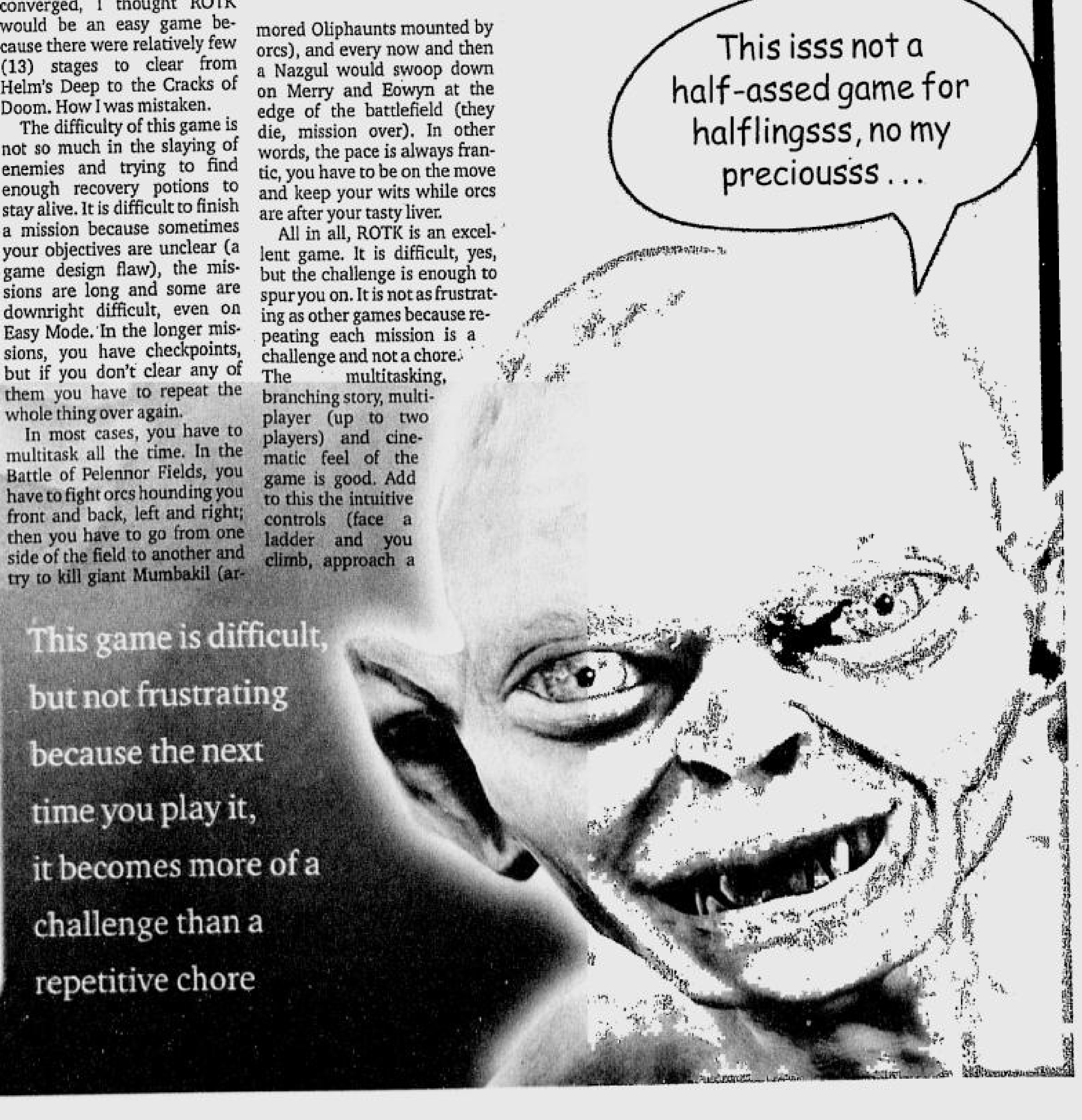
In most cases, you have to multitask all the time. In the Battle of Pelennor Fields, you have to fight orcs hounding you front and back, left and right; then you have to go from one side of the field to another and try to kill giant Mumbakil (armored Oliphaunts mounted by orcs), and every now and then a Nazgul would swoop down on Merry and Eowyn at the edge of the battlefield (they die, mission over). In other words, the pace is always frantic, you have to be on the move and keep your wits while orcs are after your tasty liver.

THE LORD OF THE RINGS
THE RETURN OF THE KING

All in all, ROTK is an excellent game. It is difficult, yes, but the challenge is enough to spur you on. It is not as frustrating as other games because repeating each mission is a challenge and not a chore. The multitasking, branching story, multiplayer (up to two players) and cinematic feel of the game is good. Add to this the intuitive controls (face a ladder and you climb, approach a catapult and you can operate it) and the use of objects in the environment (pikes, hot coal) as weapons and you have a well-balanced fight between ornery orc and half-assed Halfling.

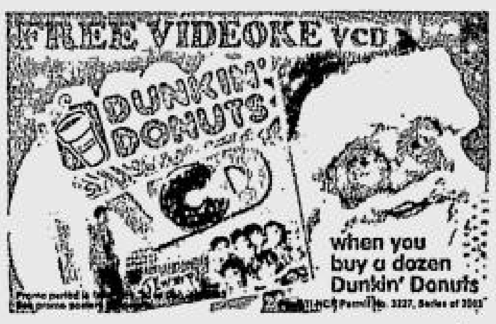
Despite its overall difficulty, the concept of the game is good. The mixture of sight, sound and edge-of-your-seat gameplay in ROTK ups the excitement level a notch higher. Even though it's a hack-and-slash game at heart, the good level designs and cinematics make up for it.

So, if you can't wait for ROTK to be played on the silver screen, check out ROTK the video game. It's the third best thing to closing the Lord of the Rings loop—after reading the book and watching the movie.


This isss not a half-assed game for halflingsss, no my preciousss . . .

This game is difficult, but not frustrating because the next time you play it, it becomes more of a challenge than a repetitive chore

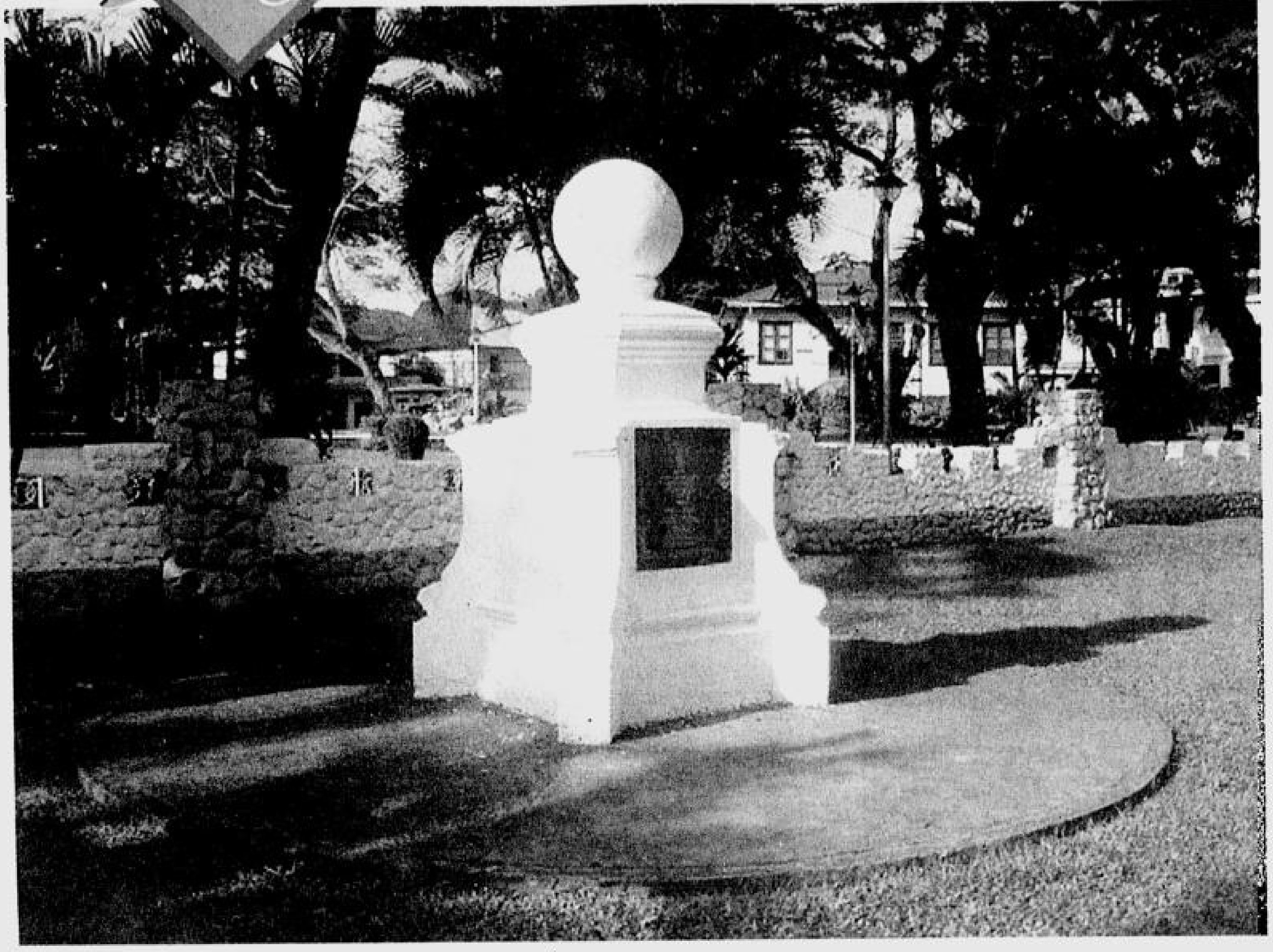
FREE VIDEOKE VCD when you buy a dozen Dunkin' Donuts



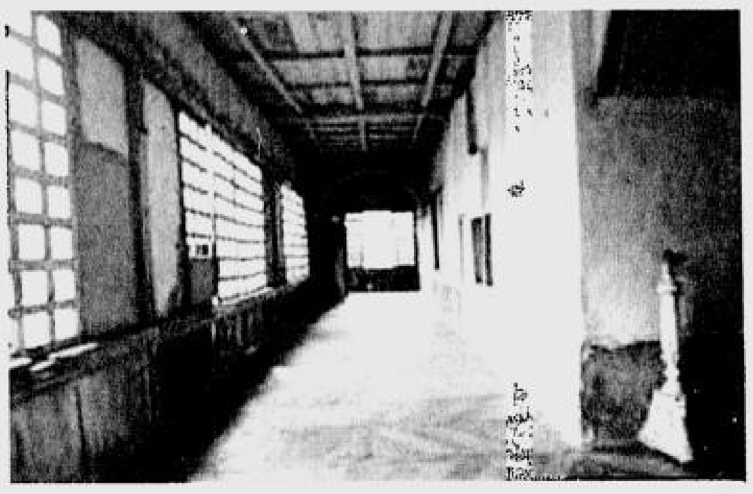
Arts/Design LIFESTYLE

For feedback, text us at (0919) 880-3354 or (0916) 200-1160
or e-mail us at pr_lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph

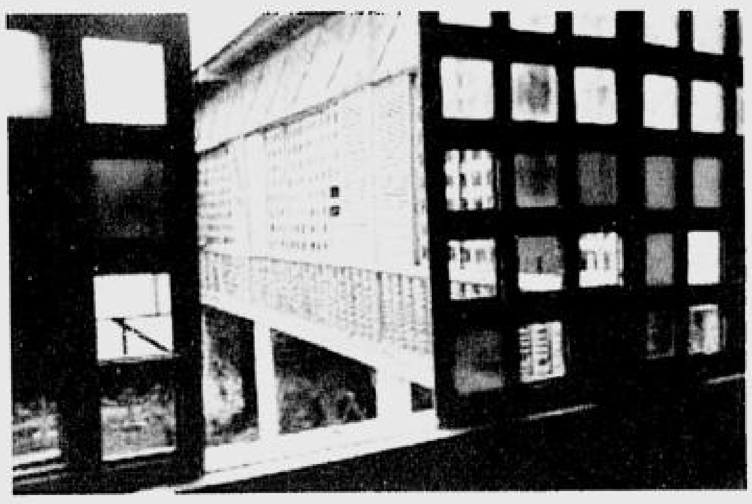
Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso
Subsection Editor Lito Zulueta



A MONUMENT in the town plaza reminds Dapitanons of Rizal's four-year exile in their city.



WIDE passages built centuries ago from the best tropical hardwood are promenades that run along the exterior façades of the Lazi convento in Siquijor Island.



VENTANILLAS with heavily turned balusters are seen beneath windows still glazed with colored glass from the 19th century.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF NCCA

In 2004, wake up to the splendor of the Philippines

PRIDE OF PLACE

Augusto F. Villalon

HOW wonderful it would be if the New Year would rouse Filipinos up so they could appreciate the natural and cultural splendor that surrounds them.

We have so much beauty around us that we take for granted. The coming 2004 would be a good year to discover the Philippines, to get to know our country beyond the "Wow! Philippines" superficialities.

Go in-depth. Get to know for yourself what the country and its landscape are really like, so as to develop above all a strong feel for the culture and the people. There are many special places in our islands.

The imprint of a national hero lives on in Dapitan, Zamboanga del Norte. Although he departed from his Dapitan exile over a century ago, the presence of Rizal remains in Dapitan. He made an impact on that laid-back seaside city. He treated the sick from the Casa Redonda, an octagonal nipa house in his seaside retreat where he once lived, which is now the Rizal Shrine. He designed an irrigation and water distribution system that became the basis of the present city water system. He installed a relief map of Mindanao that still remains in the town plaza. Dapitan is unique because nowhere in the Philippines is there such a strong presence of a national hero.

Visible from the Dapitan coast is Bohol, an island rich in heritage. Its coastline is strung with a necklace of magnificent Spanish colonial churches that remain as centerpieces of well-preserved towns whose municipal buildings and private houses date back over two centuries ago. The province has become one of the country's tourism success stories. Local communities oversee the tourism program, recognizing that their own cultural and natural heritage establishes Bohol as one of the more unique locations in the Philippines.

Largest convento

Off Dumaguete in Negros Oriental is small Siquijor Island, a lonely outpost that boasts of a magnificent Spanish colonial church beside the largest convento in the country. Built of tropical hardwood that has aged through the centuries, the imposing convento is the focus of the island.

Not many Cebuanos know that their province offers more than its well-known beach resorts. A drive south to Carcar reveals a relatively unknown 19th century town with a number of intact Cebuano-style *bahay na bato* whose delicately carved façades surround a plaza with a magnificent church. Farther down the coast is a series of splendid fortress-churches that stand facing the sea in silent guard against Muslim invaders who staged periodic raids on the island. Churches were large enough to shelter an entire town that would take refuge within their doors as soon as bells rang from lookout towers to signal an invasion. Churches and watchtowers punctuate the idyllic coastal landscape of mountains and sea.

Iloilo City stands as testament to another bygone era. Ornate commercial edifices, most of them decaying, survive in the city center as quiet reminder of its golden days as the "Queen City of the South." Designed in a cornucopia of architectural styles, mansions of sugar barons continue to stand as proudly as ever, defying all signals that they are anachronisms in today's society. A short drive from the city is Miag-ao Church with a richly-carved sandstone façade, a naïf Saint Christopher dressed in Filipino farmer's clothes and surrounded by local vegetation.

Patrician

Patrician Silay in Negros Occidental once called itself the "Paris of the South." In the early 20th century, sugar boomed. Profits from vast sugar haciendas built mansions for the planters whose lifestyles were as grand as their houses. Life was good. There were operas, grand balls and banquets for entertainment.

Behind the big houses of landlords, houses of farm workers, the often-exploited backbone of sugar plantations, show the Visayan love of architectural intricacy. Unlike any other bahay kubo variation in the Philippines, the Western Visayan version of the bahay kubo weaves bamboo in lace-like intricacy to form delicate walls, window coverings, and doors. These are tropical baskets that contain life.

There is so much variety of cultural and natural heritage in just the central part of the Philippine archipelago that illustrates the lifestyle particular to that region of the country. The entire heritage picture rounds out the experience—cuisine, language, song, dance and crafts.

Aside from our national heritage, each place in the country has its own unique heritage that sets it apart which gives the Philippines a special texture.

There is much in the Philippines that evokes a strong pride of place. Visiting those places expands horizons.

Another alternative is to expand your horizons overseas. The Four Kingdoms World Heritage Tour touches World Heritage sites in Asia: the temples of Sukhothai in Thailand, the old royal city of Luang Prabang in Laos, the former Imperial capital of Hue in Vietnam, the commercial entrepôt of Hoi An in Vietnam, and the serene temples of Angkor in Cambodia. Information and bookings for departures that begin in January are available at G&S Travel. Call 6360895, 6359305/06.

E-mail your comments and feedback to afvillalon@hotmail.com

onstage 2nyt

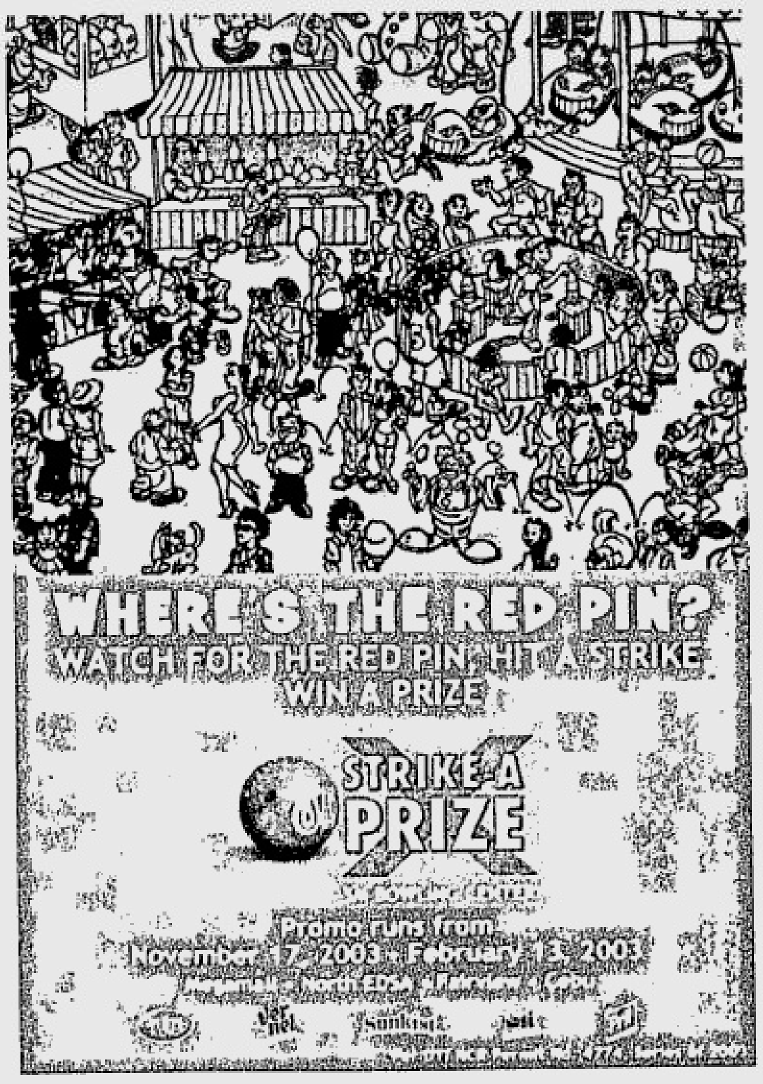
Cowboy Grill

LAS PIÑAS ☎ 801.7644	HEADWORKZ PUZZLES	OPEN FROM 6PM TO 5AM NO ENTRANCE FEE
MABINI ☎ 525.1474	GIFTED MIND FAT 16/M.CIRCUIT	OPEN FROM 6PM TO 6AM NO ENTRANCE FEE
MALATE ☎ 521.8143	E-MAGE M-PEOPLE	OPEN FROM 6PM TO 5AM NO ENTRANCE FEE
NOVALICHES ☎ 936.9757	ICE KENDI FREEZE	OPEN FROM 6PM TO 5AM NO ENTRANCE FEE
BIÑAN ☎ (049)511.7268	BEAT BOX MIXED UP	OPEN FROM 6PM TO 5AM NO ENTRANCE FEE

TIA MARIA'S

JUPITER ☎ 890 4735	CROSSTOWN	NO ENTRANCE FEE
REMEDIOS ☎ 522.0429	VERSE 2 0 2 7	NO ENTRANCE FEE
FOREST	DYNASOUL T.M. KALAW COR. PARADE ST. LUNETA PARK, MANILA	FREE PULUTAN EVERY 2 PITCHERS OR 5 BOTTLES OF BEER ☎ 400-7435/525-0514

DECEMBER 29 MONDAY 438-3942


WHERE'S THE RED PIN?
WATCH FOR THE RED PIN, HIT A STRIKE WIN A PRIZE
STRIKE-A PRIZE
Promo runs from November 7, 2003 - February 13, 2003
Sunkist

WE DELIVER!
INQUIRER

Hungry for news that would feed your mind? The Philippine Daily Inquirer delivers straight to your doorstep. Subscribe to the country's #1 newspaper now!

Call: 528-0183 / 528-0186

Fax reply coupon to: 528-02-34 or mail to:

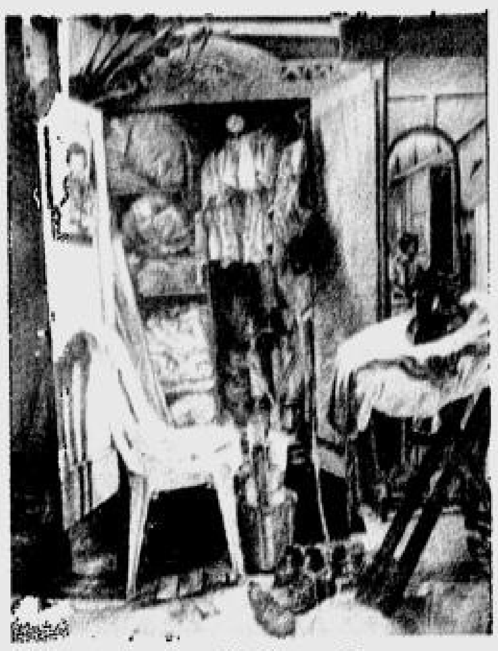
Philippine Daily Inquirer
c/o Circulation Division
Ground Floor, Trinity Building
636 T.M. Kalaw St., Ermita, Manila

I'd like to subscribe to the Philippine Daily Inquirer.
Please have my copy delivered to:

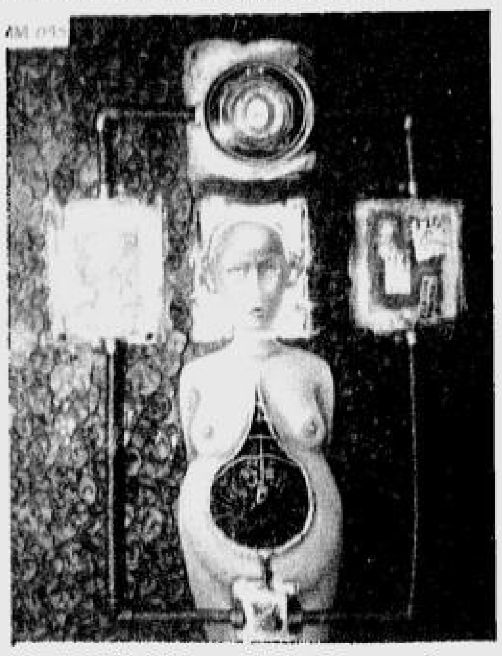
Name ______________________
Address ______________________
______________________ Tel. No. __________
Signature______________________

BEST MOMENTS WITH THE BEST
6 mos. to pay, 0% interest!
Weinstein

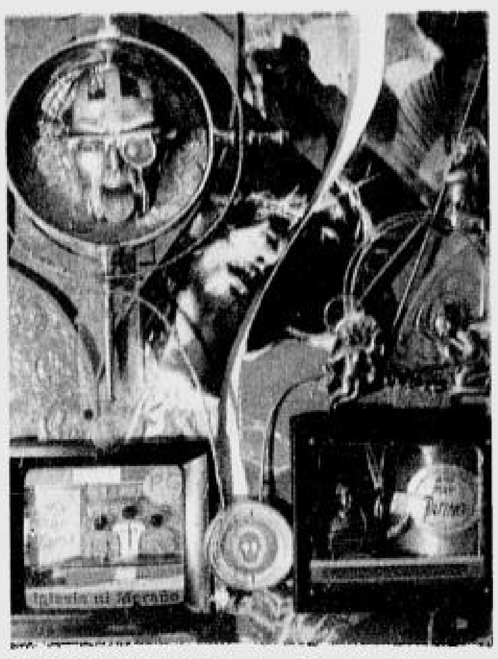
WEINSTEIN PIANOS
The Best in German Technology
CUBAO: 2nd Flr., Ali Mall, Araneta Center, Cubao
Quezon City Tels. 912-4884 912-4886
BACLARAN: Uniwide Coastal Mall Tel. 879-0239
CEBU: Gaisano Mall, Tabunok, Cebu City



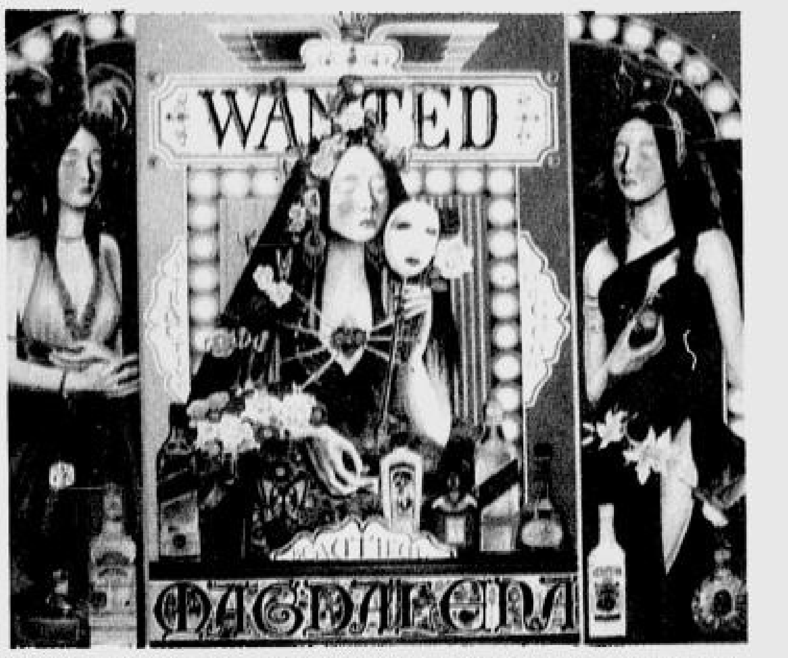
"WITHIN Without," by Jaypee Samson (drawing, best entry)



"STATION of Womanity for Future and Security," by Darwin Guevarra (mixed media, second prize)



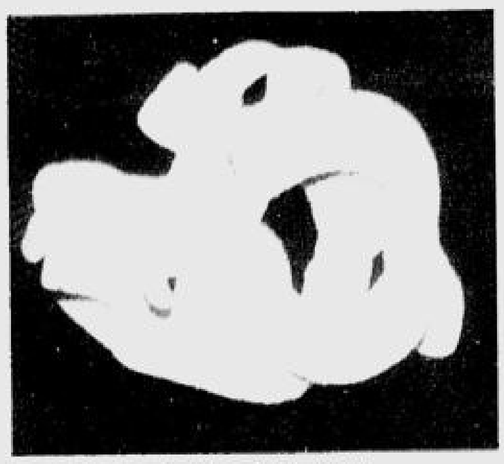
"DISCERNIBLE Discourse," by Godofredo Zapanta (mixed media, first prize)



"MIDNIGHT Altarpiece," by Noli Manalang (painting, second prize)

DESPITE CRISIS OF VISION

AAP animates art



"GULAY," by Maria Cristine Valdezco (sculpture, first prize)

By Gino Dormiendo
Contributor

THE JURY for the seven categories of this year's Art Association of the Philippines (AAP) Annual faced the formidable task of having to sift through hundreds of entries stacked up along the walls of the GSIS Museo ng Sining, deciding which had something significant or meritorious to say or show by way of substance and form—and ultimately choosing the pieces that truly mattered in this anything-goes-in-the-annual art gathering.

So much said for quantity, which, I gather, had exceeded the organizer's expectations, as art contests have become the shortest route to fame and fortune (for this year's Annual, the cash bonanza was generously provided by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts; the first prize was increased to P50 grand, and along with it came a handsome metal sculpture by Ral Arrogante).

As to the quality of the entries, this year's AAP Annual had its unflattering share of the usual tripe, the predictable hokum and the hoary cliches that had dominated past stagings.

The hotly contested painting category, in particular, turned out a dud, with three representational works ultimately clawing their way to the winners' list.

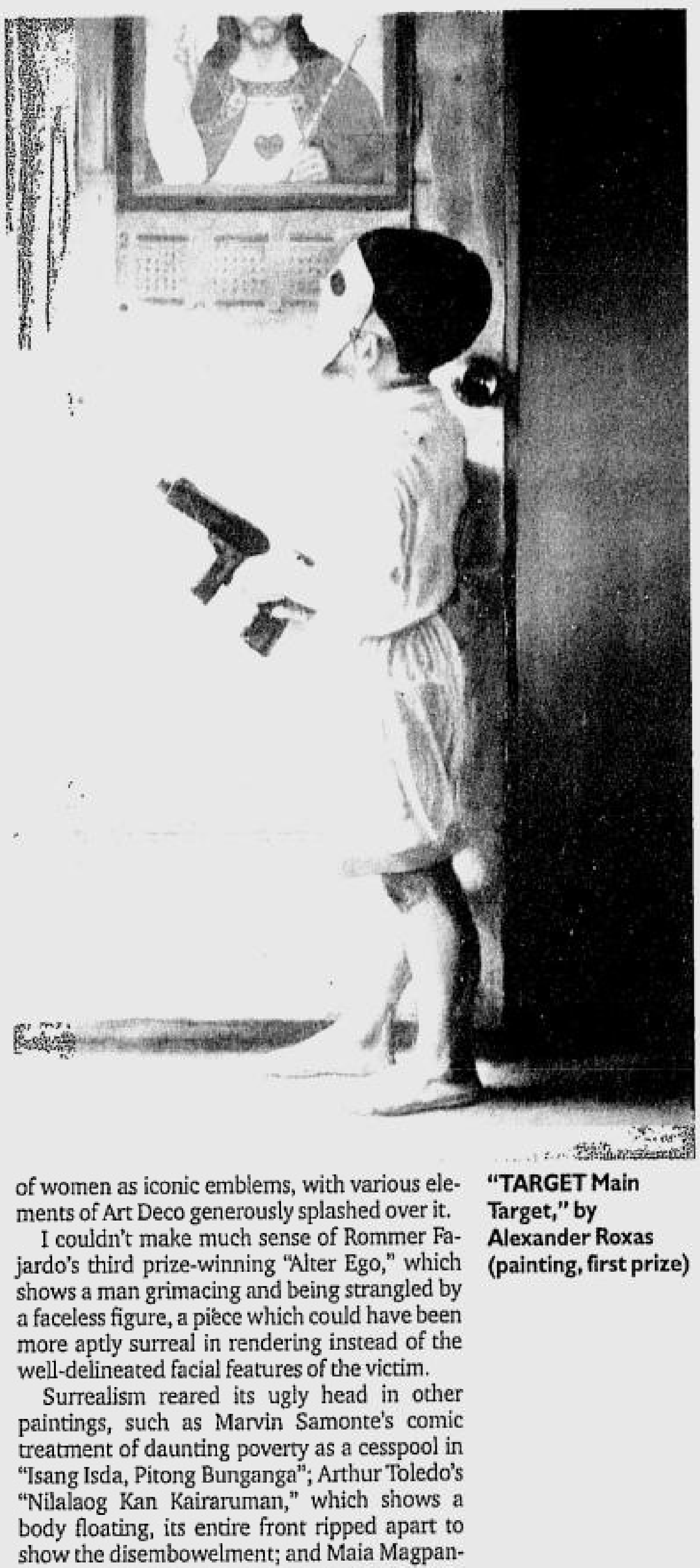
The sculpture entries were mostly far from inspired and inspiring in the strict three-dimensional sense, as majority of them literally fell flat on the venue floor, whittled down by their rather minuscule size and limited format.

It was the mixed-media category that proved a real delight, visually and technically, albeit the unflattering air of homegrown horror vacui got in the way of many of the pieces.

Ditto with drawing, which ignited a lively debate between the stalwarts of realism and abstraction.

Uneven

The winners in the painting category were an uneven lot. First prize-winner Alexander Roxas' "Target Main Target" encapsulates the roots of violence by its depiction of a boy with a mask and holding aloft a toy gun, while the icon of the Sacred Heart hovers above the wall.



"TARGET Main Target," by Alexander Roxas (painting, first prize)

Second-prize winner Noli Principe Manalang's "Midnight Altarpiece" is a triptych in finely wrought watercolor, a finely etched triad of women as iconic emblems, with various elements of Art Deco generously splashed over it.

I couldn't make much sense of Rommer Fajardo's third prize-winning "Alter Ego," which shows a man grimacing and being strangled by a faceless figure, a piece which could have been more aptly surreal in rendering instead of the well-delineated facial features of the victim.

Surrealism reared its ugly head in other paintings, such as Marvin Samonte's comic treatment of daunting poverty as a cesspool in "Isang Isda, Pitong Bunganga"; Arthur Toledo's "Nilalaog Kan Kairaruman," which shows a body floating, its entire front ripped apart to show the disembowelment; and Maia Magpantay's "Binalot sa Katotohanan," with its figure hideously entrapped in a diaphanous plastic sheet, a metaphor of the dire straits Filipinos find themselves in.

All three winners in mixed media delve into the raging religious schism that has divided our people today, with a host of quasi-socioreligious issues cleverly tacked in.

First-prize winner Godofredo Zapanta Jr.'s "Discernible Discourse" parodies the war between religious sectors, with a photo-transfer of Christ on the Cross powerfully split into two and a court jester sticking out his tongue as the ultimate act of mockery.

Darwin Guevarra's runner-up "Station of Womanity for Future and Security" shows womanhood bearing the ills of society and comes complete with recycled junk and semiotic appurtenances.

Tina Cruz' "Salvation" shows a dolorous visage of Christ hovering above a grid of images carved from candle and bearing emblematic white, red and black hues.

Honorable mention winner Noel Pama Sr.'s "Cybernetics," in oil, copper wire and found objects, bears a large mask, with eyes closed/open to show the high-tech encroachment that is either for bad or good.

Wilson Belarmino's "Nature's Life" reworks the main concept of his Philip Morris-winning piece on a much smaller and narrower scale.

I found Ed Ramos' "Pinagpako-pakong Pangako Bayan sa Krus Nakapako" as the most provocative of the lot in its portrait of two impoverished kids gazing pointedly at the viewer, framed by political slogans culled from 30 years of the Pinoy's failed deliverance.

In sculpture, Ma. Cristina Valdezco's "Gulay," the first prize winner, is disarmingly simple though sorely lacking in resonance compared to the runners-up. What it originally lacks in power it amply makes up for in its exploration of medium—cotton strings cleverly manipulated and reconfigured like a strange textured creature crawling on the floor.

Arnel Borja's "Justice and Balance," the first runner-up, is a decidedly more playful, inventively richer in its use of medium (steel, wood and marble).

The third-prize winner, "Shedding of Innocence," a bronze sculpture by Earl Enriquez, shows the bust of a woman on a pointed pedestal, its arms entwined to reveal both innocence and sensuality.

The other sculptural works are half-realized renderings, either ponderously overdone or grossly unfulfilled.

Drawing and photography

The drawing category's best entry, Jaypee Samson's "With Without" (in ballpen), shows a room in total disarray, bearing the clutter and chaos of harried daily existence, from the pairs of shoes splattered on the floor to the antique cabinet flung open to further reveal the dweller's messyness. Farther still, we see a forlorn figure by the window anticipating the arrival of someone.

Smith Herrera's "Queen" (pastel on paper) is a largely abstract piece, with its pictorial field engaged in a lively dialog between horizontal and vertical lines.

Raoul Ignacio Rodriguez' "Reklusyon" has Charlie Co-like blindfolded characters in multileveled realities topped by a landscape of twisted ghettos, bizarre in its post-apocalyptic nightmare.

Warren Balane's "Naglalahong Espasyo" shows a circular tableaux of footwear in Imeldific quantity that perplexes the eye.

Photography's best entry, "Recent Vincent," is a homage to the tormented artist who famously killed himself in a rage of supreme madness. This ingenious work by Racquell May Dalangpan combines elements of performance art, painting, production design and of course photography in an attempt to re-configure Van Gogh's self-portrait.

Honorable mention winner Wai Navarroza's "The End," is an infrared film on silver gelatin, which has a surreal quality to it, showing two ghost-like female figures traipsing the lake on a small boat.

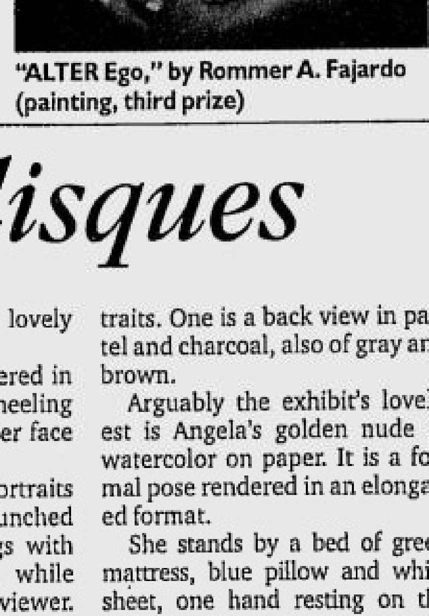
Edwin Loyola's "Pillars" examines the pillars of the old Taal Church, capturing the time-beaten but solid-as-ever edifice.

Digital art yielded a slew of experimental works, thanks to the magic of digital photoshop technology, but Dennis Magdamo's "Flagmaidens" easily stood out by virtue of its chosen subject—flower-bearing, Kabuki-like women—backdropped by a Philippine flag with its yellow and red colors echoed by the same floral elements.

Finally, the Leo Benesa Award for art criticism, sorely missed last year, drew just four entries, with the prize going to Jevijoe B. Vitug's piece, "AAP Windows 03: Annual Inundations of Stylistic Heterogeneity and a Deluge of Stylish Appropriations." Following the format of Microsoft Word, from start to shutdown, the essay explores the many wide-ranging issues and prospects in the AAP Annual, the concerns of the art community, and the nagging problems that confront artists amid globalization.

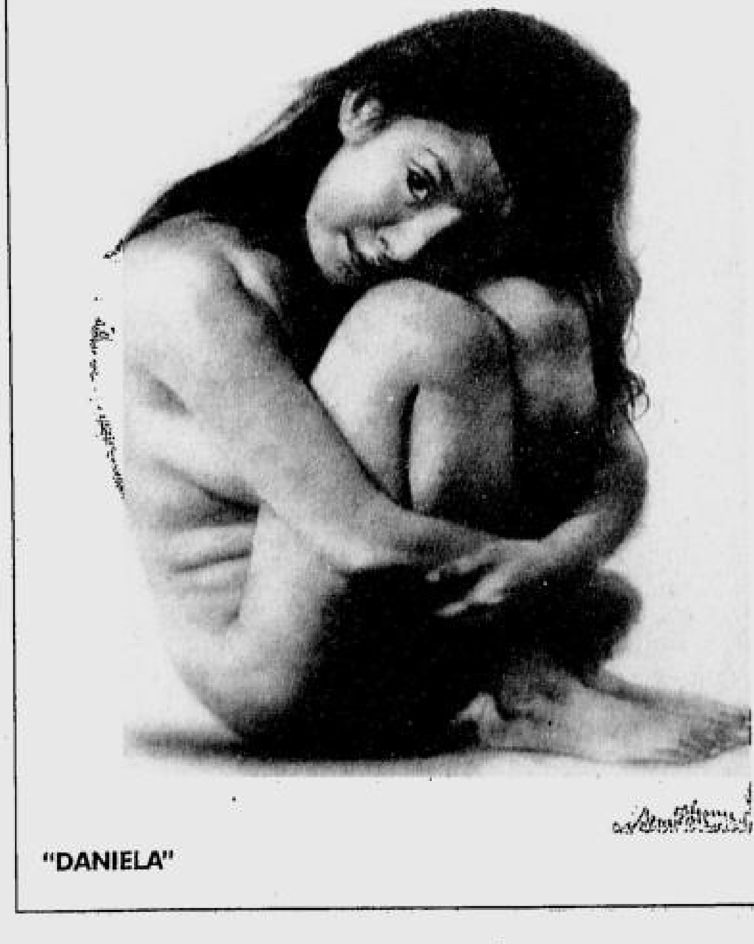
In Vitug's critique and in the multitudinous art entries, there are the enduring questions of identity, ethnicity and making art relate to the experience of seeing and being in the world.

E-mail author at gdormiendo@yahoo.com



"ALTER Ego," by Rommer A. Fajardo (painting, third prize)

Modern-dress odalisques



"DANIELA"

By Constantino C. Tejero

THE NUDE in Philippine art, like the still life, is usually rendered as a mere study, in this case, of the human anatomy.

Most Filipino artists don't seem to be interested in recasting it like the writhing odalisques and *majas desnudas* of European art. With a few exceptions (National Artist Guillermo Tolentino's "Oblation"), it figures as a major subject of art only in illustrations of our creation myth (folksy renditions of Malakas and Maganda).

Such shouldn't be the case, because the human nude is one of the loveliest sights the human eye can behold. And the human anatomy is one of the most complex forms the human mind can imagine.

The nudes of Ephraim Samson, in lavish display through December in The Crucible Gallery at Artwalk, 4/L, Bldg. A, SM Megamall, show this complexity and loveliness.

Some may dismiss these pieces as 13 shameless portraits of starlets, but they're actually ennobling, that is, Samson's art actually ennobles the form. The women's nakedness is never cheapened, but is, in fact, enhanced by the artist's control of light and shade, while character manifests in the physical contortions.

Diana Zubiri has four portraits in oil pastel. In two, she's lounging, one showing her with an intense faraway look, the half-profile of her brown body set against ochre-yellow, slate-green and brown.

In the third, in slate, aquamarine, brown and gray, she falls back with upraised arms, breasts upthrust, as if offering her anatomy to the viewer.

The finest is a study in foreshortening, where she's lying amid yellow, brown and gray. The whole portrait has a lovely golden glow.

Shiela Barwani is rendered in charcoal, depicting her kneeling in a gray monochrome, her face turned away.

Daniela has four portraits showing her kneeling, hunched over, or clasping her legs with her face on her knees, while looking straight at the viewer. The figure is rendered in charcoal, with the gray monochrome highlighted by brownish tinge of pastel.

Stella L has two portraits. One is the classic odalisque on rumpled fabric. The other is a provocative pose, with the lady on all fours on the bed, eyes closed, face on the mattress, bottoms up.

Her rendering is the reverse of the technique used in Daniela's portraits. Now the figure is a brownish monochrome in pastel with a grayish tinge of charcoal.

Angela Velez has two portraits. One is a back view in pastel and charcoal, also of gray and brown.

Arguably the exhibit's loveliest is Angela's golden nude in watercolor on paper. It is a formal pose rendered in an elongated format.

She stands by a bed of green mattress, blue pillow and white sheet, one hand resting on the backrest of a chestnut chair draped with lacy sheer fabric. It is a pose worthy of the Renaissance.

A graduate of the University of Santo Tomas College of Fine Arts, Samson is known for his hyperrealism (as in his watercolor rendition of Angela Velez). He used to illustrate comic strips to support his studies, and worked as a cinema cartel artist after graduation.

He is now based in San Francisco, California and would only occasionally grace our galleries. And as some viewers of this exhibit might say, What grace!

Yearend exhibit features Mother and Child works

WORKS by Ang Kiukok, Mario Parial, Lydia Velasco, Norma Belleza and Angelito Antonio are featured in the "Madonna and Child Yuletide" exhibit of Galerie Joaquin. The show runs until Jan. 10, 2004.

Also featured are works by the gallery's in-house artists such as Dominic Rubio, Edwin Tres Reyes, Bernard Vista, Roniño Quinto and Richard Arimado.

The Ang Kiukok is a 1994 18" x 12" work in a red-orange background.

The works of Parial are three 24" x 18" gems done in oil on canvas. "Madonna and Child of the Fields" is accentuated with gold leaf paint as part of the embroidery of the blouse of the Madonna.

"Mother and Child of the Sunflowers" has the Madonna's shawl wrapped as a blanket on the child. Meanwhile, "Parol" is a timely work for the Yuletide.

Velasco's are three 30" x 24" works titled "Mother and Child with Cat," "Mother Kissing Child" and "Two Mothers with their Child."

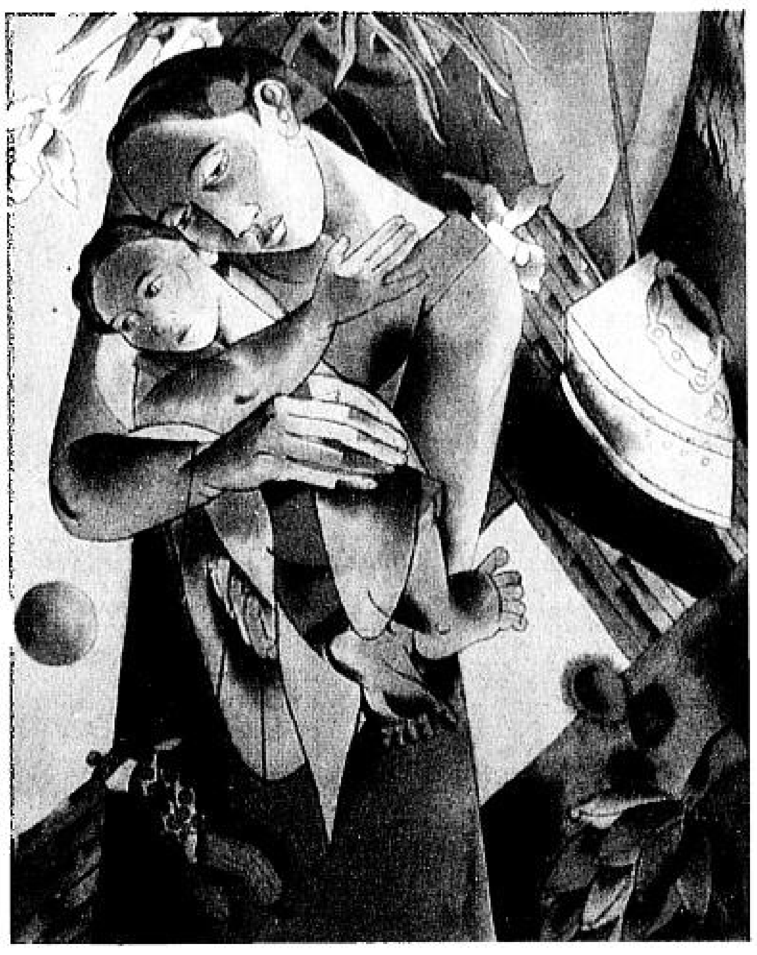
In "Mother and Child at Sunrise," Antonio is true to his cubist influences. It shows a mother carrying a child wrapped in a green blanket with everyday objects depicted in multiple perspectives. The objects include a charcoal-fed iron, fruits, orchids, a plant and a wooden hand puppet.

"Mother and Child of the Home" has a seated mother and child amid fruits, vegetables, fish, a kitchen knife and a religious symbol—apparent representations of objects that preoccupy a mother in a home.

Rubio's are 35" x 35" works titled "Ang Pamilya," "Mother with her Two Children" and "Mother and Child of the Tibolis."

Tres Reyes is represented by a 30" x 24" "Madonna and Child of the Woodlands" and a 40" x 30" "Garden Madonna."

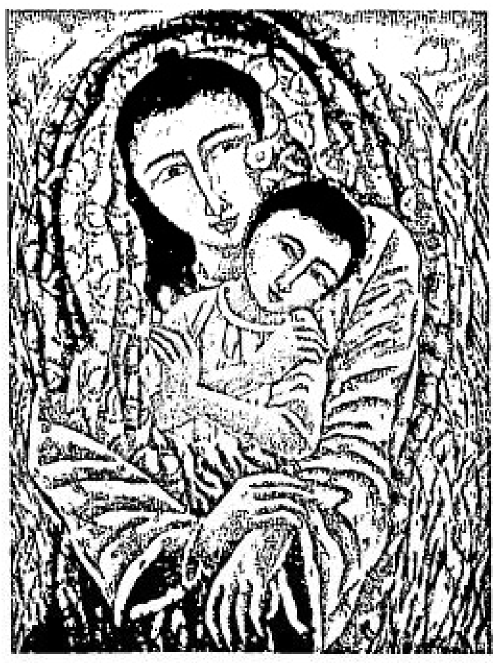
Bernard Vista presents a contemporary musing on the age-old theme. Richard Arimado has several colorful works in cubist style.



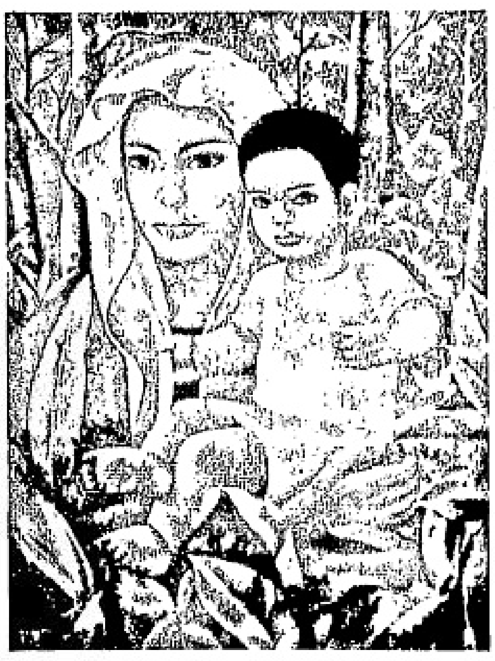
"MOTHER and Child at Sunrise," by Angelito Antonio

The Mother and Child theme has cut across civilizations and historical eras, ranging from Mycenaean and Athenian vases to stone carvings in Central America. With the coming of Christianity, the theme became a homage to the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Child Jesus.

Galerie Joaquin is located at 371 corner P. Guevarra St. and Montessori Lane Addition Hills, San Juan. Call 7239253 or 723 9418.



"MADONNA and Child of the Fields," by Mario Parial



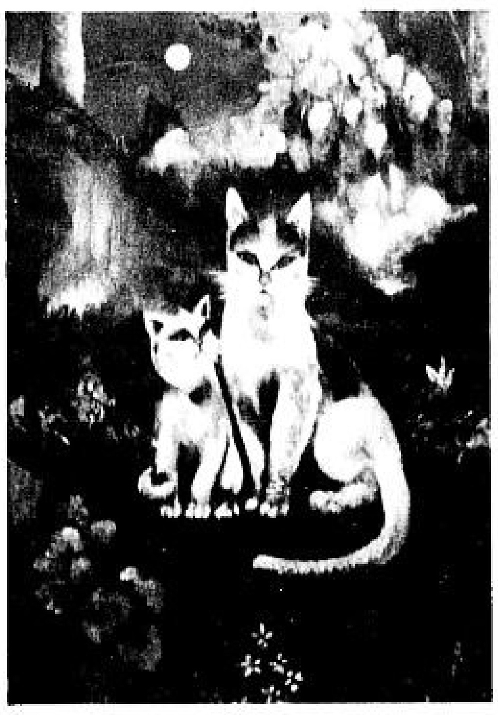
"MADONNA of Woodlands," by Edwin Tres Reyes

DEAN Jaime de los Santos (standing, in barong) of the College of Fine Arts and Design of the University of Santo Tomas was the guest of honor in the opening of the show "Art in Motion" by the Grupong Atelier.

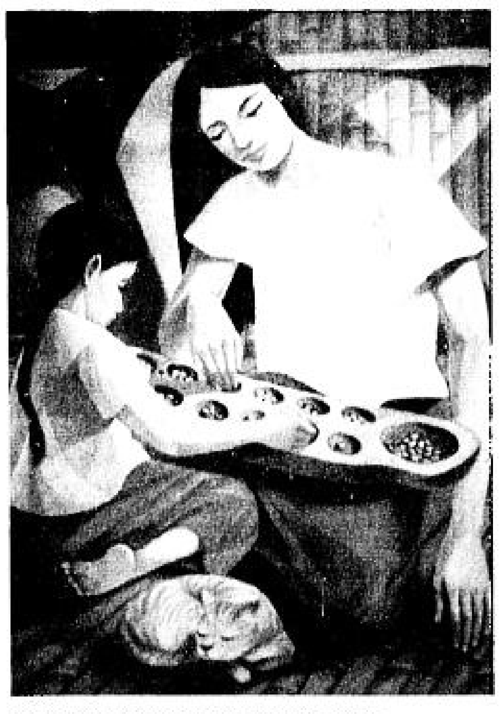
'Art in Motion' in Intramuros

GALERIA de las Islas presents "Art in Motion" at 3/L, Silahis Center, 744 Gen. Luna St., Intramuros, Manila. On exhibit are 46 works using different styles and media. Participating artists are Jossie Abella, Billy Burgos, Chiney Carpio, India de la Cruz, Hermie del Rosario, Noel Escultura, Angelo Paolo Faustino, Dodie Faustino, Tina Ocampo Mercado, Marylou San Agustin-Myers, Romy Salao and Trio Tamayo.

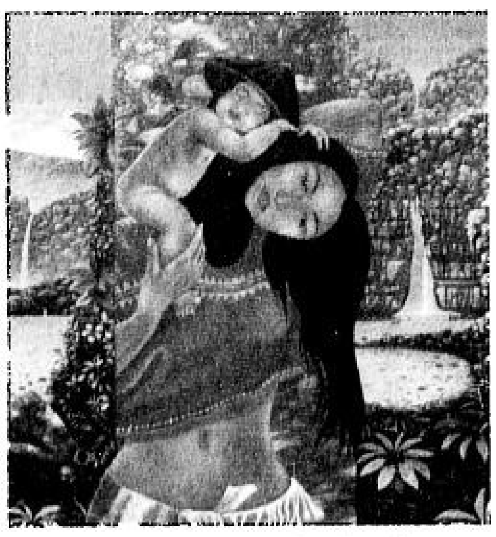
Call 5272113.



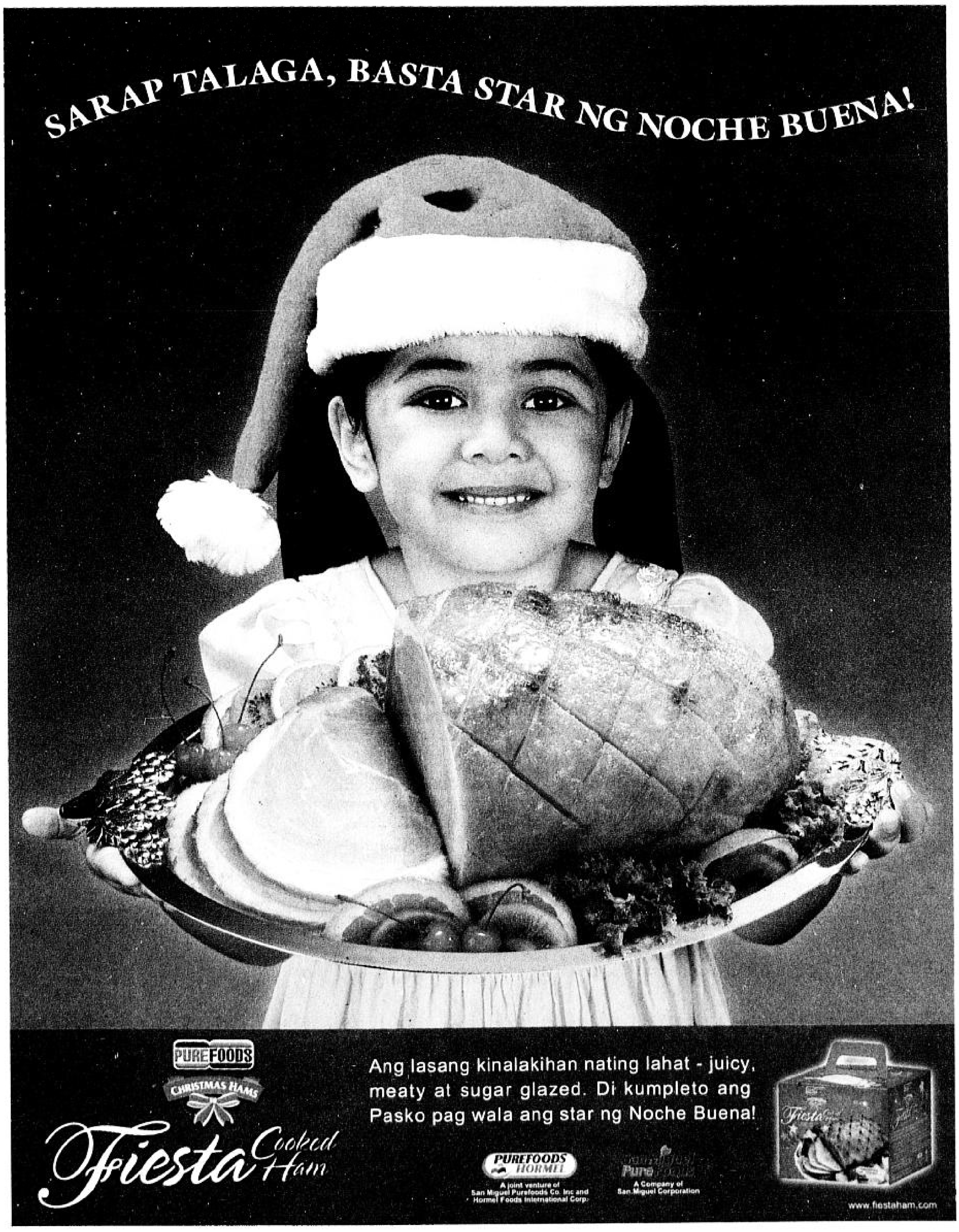
"CAT and Kitten," by Bayani Ray Acala



"SUNGKAAN," by Bernardo Vista



"MOTHER and Child at Lake Sebu," by Dominic Rubio



Ang lasang kinalakihan nating lahat - juicy, meaty at sugar glazed. Di kumpleto ang Pasko pag wala ang star ng Noche Buena!

A joint venture of San Miguel Purefoods Co. Inc and Hormel Foods International Corp.

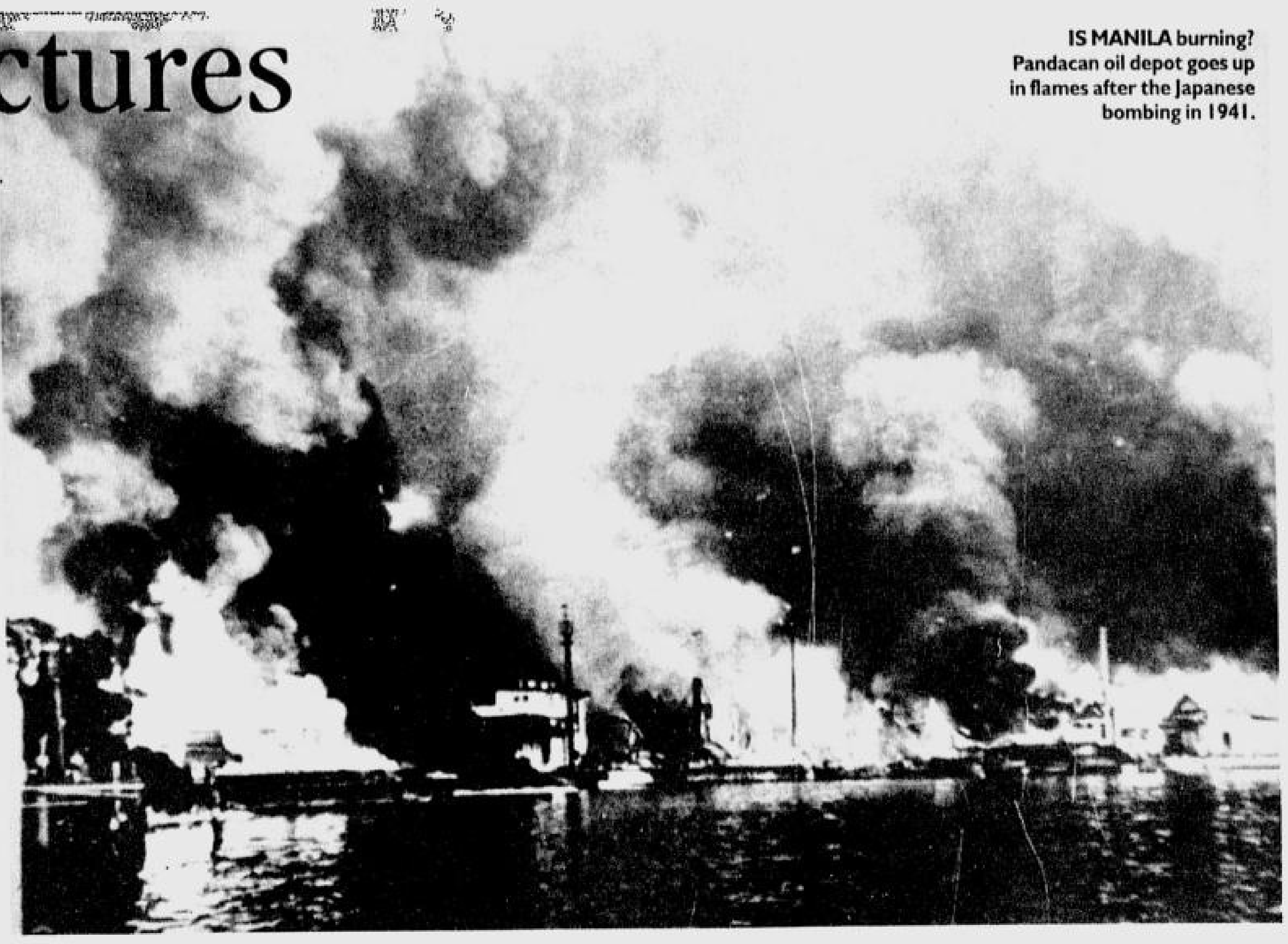
A Company of San Miguel Corporation

www.fiestaham.com

History in pictures

A Cavite museum's photo collection is a grim reminder of the 'ungodly years'

By Jerome Aning
Contributor
Photos by Rudy Esperas



IS MANILA burning? Pandacan oil depot goes up in flames after the Japanese bombing in 1941.

"COLUMNS of black, oily smoke rose thousands of feet into the sky, blocking out the morning sun and creating an apocalyptic backdrop for the last hours of American Manila."

Historians Richard Connaughton, John Pimlott and Duncan Anderson, in their book "The Battle for Manila" (1995), conveyed in words how American engineers blew up the the oil storage depots in Pandacan as the Japanese started its invasion of the Philippines during the World War II.

The scene was also captured in a photograph at the Geronimo Berenguer de los Reyes Jr. (GBR) Foundation Museum in General Trias, Cavite.

This and about 170 more photos showing the outbreak of the World War II in the Philippines, the three-year Japanese Occupation and the Allied Liberation in 1944-45 are perhaps the most touching and awe-inspiring in the GBR collection.

The pictures are part of a big collection that depicts natural and historical scenes from the 18th-century Spanish colonial times to the Fifth Republic. Tycoon De los Reyes placed the collection in a museum at his Gateway Business Park, an industrial zone at the heart of General Trias town.

Horror of war

Depicted are an assortment of scenes—destroyed landmarks, corpses of civilians killed in air raids and atrocities, mass evacuation, victorious Japanese troops, defeated Usaffe soldiers, guerrillas, wartime political events and even actual battles on land, sea and air.

Included in the collection are framed front pages of local and foreign newspapers then documenting events from the outbreak of the war to the Fall of the Japanese-occupied Philippines.

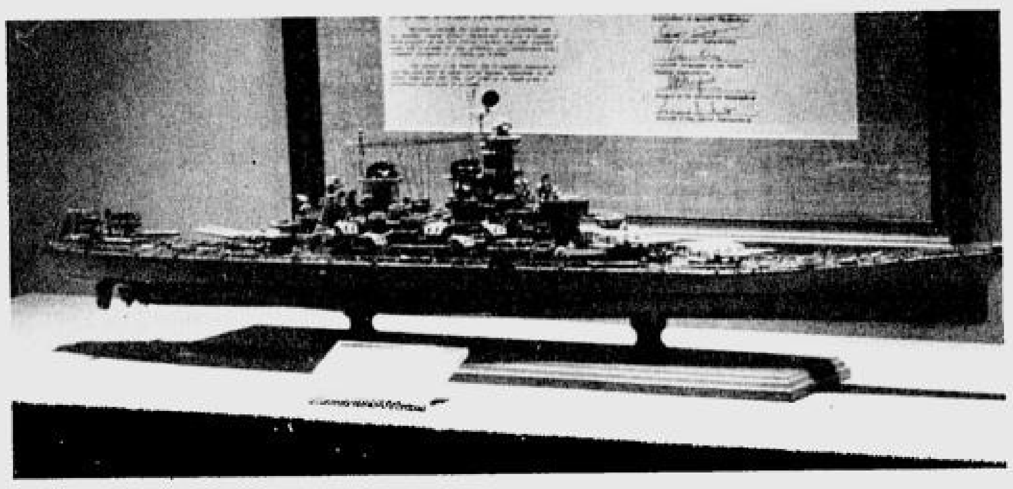
Jaime Hidalgo, Gateway's chief executive officer who sometimes act as unofficial museum tour guide, said his friend De los Reyes was only 9 years old when war broke out. De los Reyes then lived with his family on General Luna Street near the Supreme Court building in Manila's Ermita district.

The family moved to the highlands of Binangonan, Rizal, and remained there until Liberation. The young De los Reyes, Hidalgo recalled, was enchanted by dogfights between Japanese and American planes that he could see from the Binangonan Church belfry. He developed an interest in planes so had an entire pavilion at the Museum devoted to wartime and commercial aviation history.

Buying an inheritance

In the early 1990s, in a studio in San Francisco, California whose owner had just died, De los Reyes saw old photos of the Philippines. He decided to buy them from the owner's heir.

De los Reyes' photo collection also received contributions from the MacArthur Foundation, Roxas Foundation, Carlos P. Romulo Foundation and the Victor Puyat Collection, most of which were taken by photojournalist Honesto Vitug.



MODEL of American warship

De los Reyes bought small-scale models of World War II planes that he watched as a boy that became part of his growing collection.

The businessman also commissioned large paintings of the Leyte Landing and the Battle of Leyte Gulf from Stan Stokes, who worked for the Smithsonian Institute.

The 1.6-hectare GBR Museum was opened in 1995. Four of the pavilions contain the photos exhibits while the fifth houses the model planes.

The Philippines, an American Commonwealth waiting for independence promised in 1946, got embroiled in World War II on Dec. 8, about four hours after the Japanese's sneak attack on Pearl Harbor.

By Dec. 23, the Japanese were driving American and Filipino forces southward.

Tactical retreat

Usaffe commander in chief Gen. Douglas MacArthur put his so-called War Plan Orange 3 into effect. The plan called for the tactical withdrawal of all defending forces in Luzon to concentrate on the Bataan peninsula, where they were to wait for aid from the US.

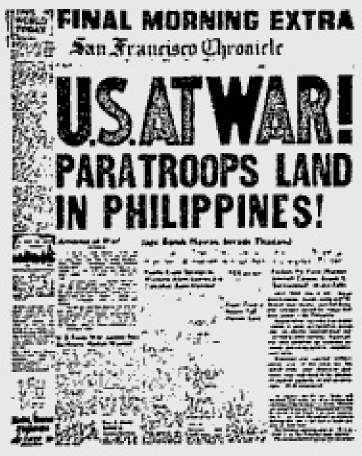
Dec. 25, 1941, Christmas Day, was perhaps one of the bleakest in Philippine history. There was no dawn mass, no singing of carols and no exchanging of gifts.

On Dec. 26, MacArthur declared Manila and its suburbs "open city."

Despite the declaration, the bombing of Manila continued.

On Dec. 29, President Franklin Roosevelt sent a message to the Filipino people praising their gallant resistance against the Japanese invaders and promising liberation.

Quezon and his vice president, Sergio Osmeña, started their new terms of office inside a tunnel in Corregidor on the same day.



FINAL MORNING EXTRA
San Francisco Chronicle
U.S. AT WAR!
PARATROOPS LAND IN PHILIPPINES!

SCREAMING HEADLINE. Worst fear comes true.

Fall of Bataan, Corregidor

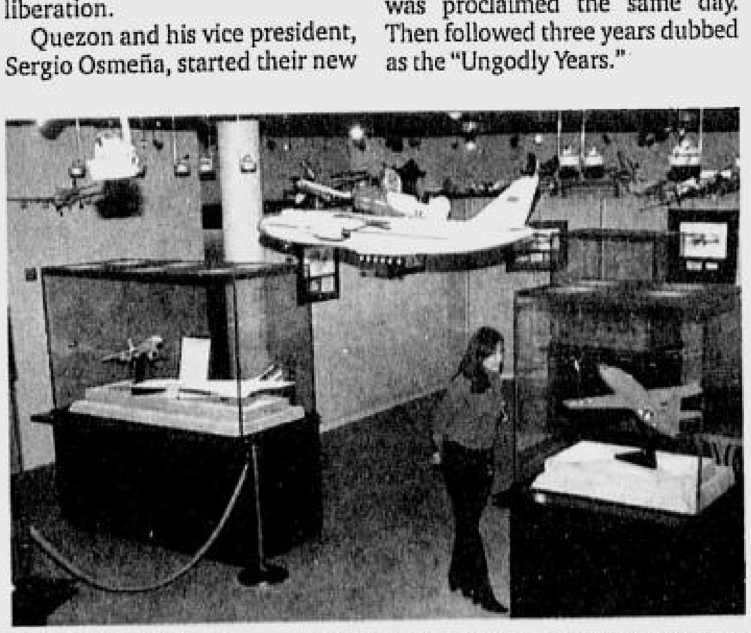
Quezon left Corregidor on Feb. 20, the following year and would reach the US on May 8. MacArthur left the island on March 11. Bataan surrendered on April 9, followed by Corregidor on May 6.

Carlos P. Romulo, then a colonel attached to the rear-echelon headquarters, recalled in his book "I Saw Philippines Fall" (1943), Manila's deserted boulevards, night clubs and hotels that looked like funeral parlors. On Manila Bay, sunken ships were sticking out like tombstones.

He saw looters roaming the streets, the ill-armed police abandoning all attempts to maintain peace and order. In the southeast, the Pandacan depots still spewed spectacular fireballs into the night sky, while directly south the Port Area was ablaze.

At the lobby of the Manila Hotel, he recalled, a band played while elegantly dressed couples, mostly Americans and British, did a slow dance. It was the final night of American Manila.

The first Japanese troops entered the southern outskirts of Manila on Jan. 2, 1942; the Japanese military administration was proclaimed the same day. Then followed three years dubbed as the "Ungodly Years."



THE GERONIMO Berenguer de los Reyes Jr. Foundation Museum has an instructive section on World War II arsenal

How to earn big bucks:

PLANTERSBANK
TOP DOLLAR
TIME DEPOSIT

Watch your dollars grow with
Plantersbank
TOP DOLLAR TIME DEPOSIT.

$5,000-$29,999
time deposit lets you enjoy:
- **3.5%** high interest in 1 year
- **FREE** Personal Accident Insurance worth **₱1 million.**

$30,000 and above
time deposit lets you enjoy:
- **4.0%** high interest in 1 year
- **FREE** Personal Accident Insurance worth **₱2 million.**

Interest is credited monthly to your USD Savings Account.
You can also borrow up to 80% of your deposit in peso equivalent.
Open a Plantersbank TOP DOLLAR Time Deposit now and earn big bucks!

For inquiries, visit any Plantersbank branch near you, call our customer service hotline at tel. no. (02) 812-5325 or (02) 812-1091 loc. 2900, email at info@plantersbank.com.ph.

Plantersbank, backed by more than 40 years of Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) banking, makes available to the Filipino entrepreneur the combined expertise and resources of their global partners: The World Bank's International Finance Corporation (IFC), Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Netherlands Development Finance Company (FMO).

PLANTERSBANK
Planters Development Bank
The Bank for Small and Medium Enterprises

Member of the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation.
Deposits insured up to ₱100,000.00

A proud member of
BancNet

12/03

Plantersbank Bldg., [illegible] Gil Puyat Ave., [illegible] Makati City, Phils. Tel. Nos. (02) 812-[illegible]

For feedback, text us at (0919) 800-3354
or (0916) 200-1160
or e-mail us at pr_lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph

LIFESTYLE

Best performances of 2003

IEZL Batucan as Beauty, with the Beast and the Enchanted Roses

By Amadís Ma. Guerrero
Contributor

IT WAS a year rich in music, and highlighted by festivals: Sangandaan 2003, the Filipino Heritage Festival, Philippine International Choral Festival and the San Agustin International Music Festival.

Like the Filipino Heritage Festival, Sangandaan 2003, a brainchild of cultural scholar Dr. Nicanor G. Tiongson, was an intoxicating melange of the arts, that is, the Seven Lively Arts (including films). It celebrated Filipino creativity and ingenuity under the impact of North American influence.

The San Agustin music fest showcased a contemporary Tango Mass interpreted by various choirs and the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra (PPO). And at the international choral fest at the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP), each number was a treat, as the choirs outdid themselves in showmanship.

The eight participating choirs were Chorus Sine Nomine of Austria, Earth Choir of Taiwan, Hamrahlid Choir of Iceland, Pilgrim Mission Choir of South Korea, Asian Institute for Liturgy and Music Chorale, San Beda College Chorale, University of San Agustin Troubadours and the University of Santo Tomas Singers. They were complemented by the Philippine Madrigal Singers and Himig Sanghaya Chorale.

At the Far Eastern University, the President's Committee on Culture presented "A Kaleidoscope of Songs (A Quest for Peace)." National Artist for Music Lucrecia Kasilag, while seated and, of course, retaining her dignity, wowed the students with a rap number on the ill effects of garbage ("Basura…").

Show biz and culture coalesced once more in "Lagi Kitang Mamahalin," a reprise musical tribute to various National Artists, directed by Chris Millado and staged at the CCP. Composer Chino Toledo conducted the PPO.

Licad bravura

At the Phil-Am Life Auditorium, pianist Cecile Licad performed with her usual bravura with favorite conductor Rodel Colmenar of the Manila Philharmonic Orchestra. During the press conference which preceded the concert, colleague Babeth Lolarga wondered aloud why Licad was not yet a National Artist.

The pianist merely raised her eyebrows, shrugged her shoulders and declared, tongue in cheek: "They can give me the Award when I'm gone!" Later she went on an outreach tour of the North, got caught in a mudslide, and nearly missed her flight back to the US.

"The Gift," a musical offering at the CCP Main Theater featuring violinist Junior Saraza, 13, proved a rewarding night for all those who had nurtured and promoted his exceptional talent, among them conductor Arturo Molina of the Manila Symphony Orchestra II, St. Scholastica's College and Bert Robledo of dzFE's "Bravo Filipino."

Well, well, what have we here, another musical superstar in the making: Licad with the piano, and young Saraza with the violin…

The Philippine Madrigal Singers celebrated their 40th anniversary with an affecting tribute to their founder, National Artist for Music Andrea O. Veneracion. And the evening was made even more memorable by the participation of so many regional choirs that Veneracion helped to train.

Soprano Margarita Yulo Gomez turned in a notable performance during her Filipino Artists Series recital at the CCP's Tanghalang Aurelio Tolentino (Little Theater). Repertoire ranged from heavy and unfamiliar to light and flirty, with correct intonation in several languages.

Tanghalang Pilipino had a winner with "Himala the Musicale," starring May Bayot as the visionary, written by Ricky Lee, composed by Vincent A. de Jesus, and directed by Soxy Topacio. Repeat performances are in order for 2004 and hopefully at a bigger venue, namely, the CCP Little Theater.

Play of the year

Another hit (and long-running) musical was Repertory Philippines' "Beauty and the Beast" at OnStage, with the disarming, multi-talented Liezl Batucan leading the cast as Beauty. For 2004, the Globe Theater at OnStage will be the home for Rep productions.

The recent musical "Urinetown," directed by Bobby of Atlantis Productions, was a zany, sophisticated and tongue-in-cheek parable about dictatorship, corruption, revolution and (possible) counterrevolution. It was entertainment with a bite, with many parallels to the Philippine situation.

For early 2004, Atlantis, to celebrate its fifth anniversary, will stage the classic "West Side Story."

BEST/D3

For him.

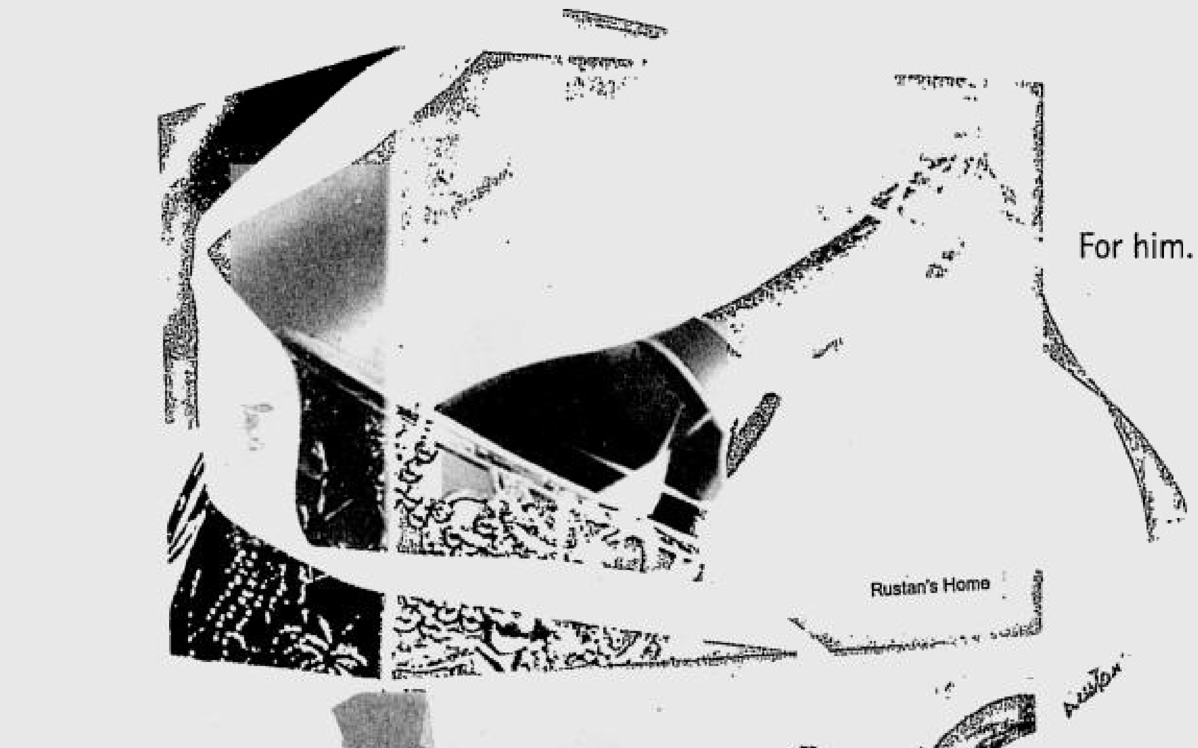
For her.

And for another great year.

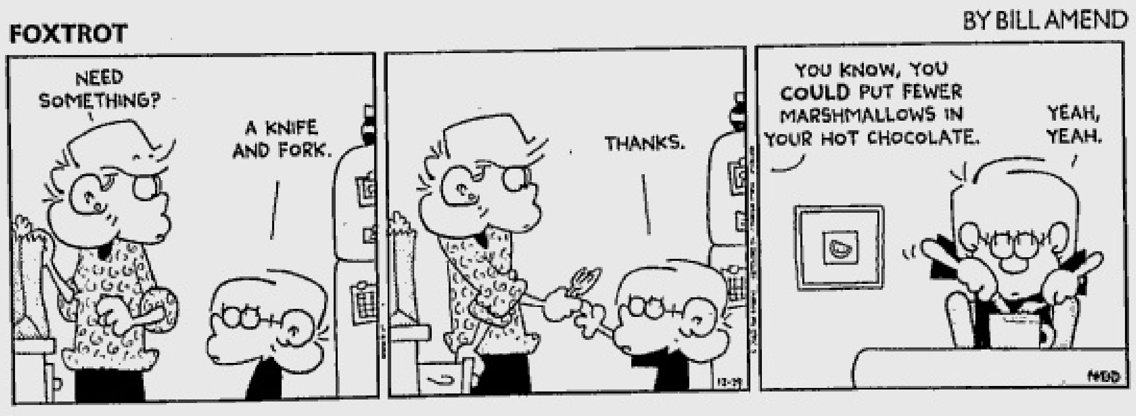
Extraordinary gifts to celebrate happy endings and wonderful beginnings.

Rustan's
Completes The Season

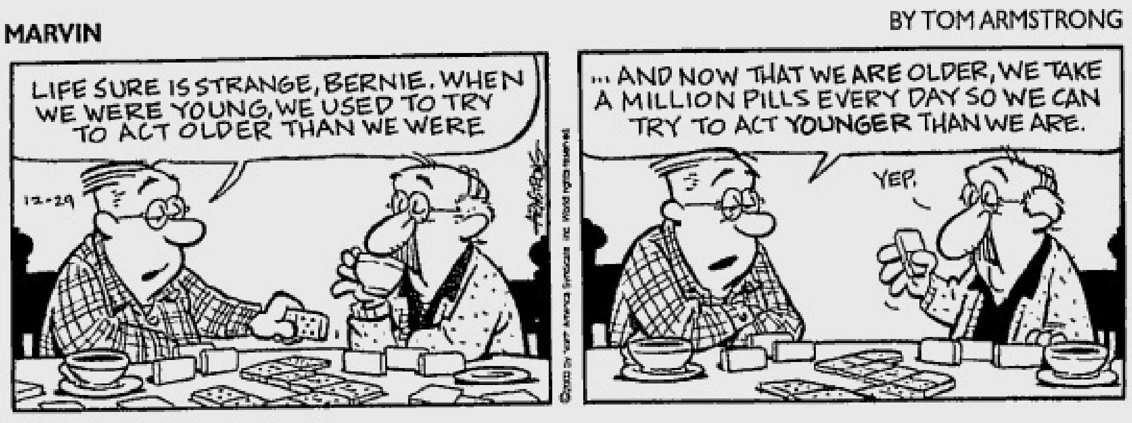
MAKATI • SHANGRI-LA PLAZA • CUBAO • HARRISON PLAZA • ALABANG • ROBINSONS PLACE MANILA • CEBU



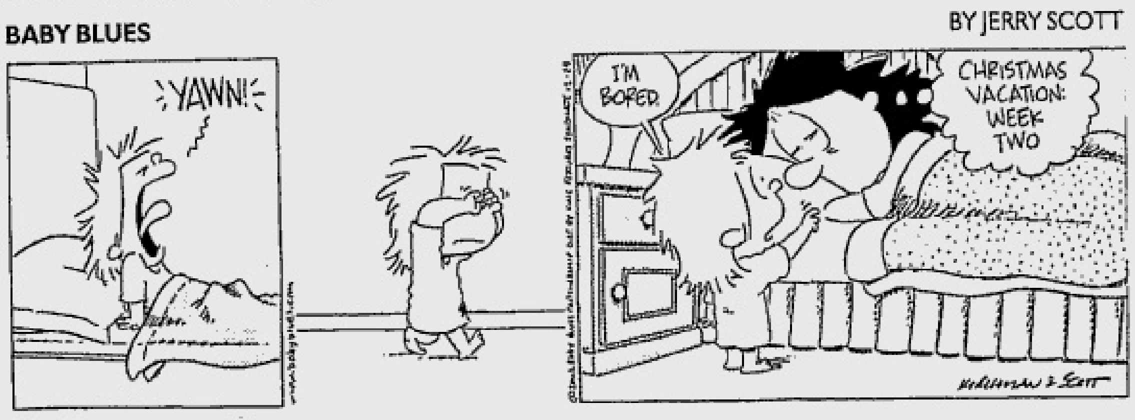
FOXTROT BY BILL AMEND


NEED SOMETHING?
A KNIFE AND FORK.
THANKS.
YOU KNOW, YOU COULD PUT FEWER MARSHMALLOWS IN YOUR HOT CHOCOLATE.
YEAH, YEAH.
12-29

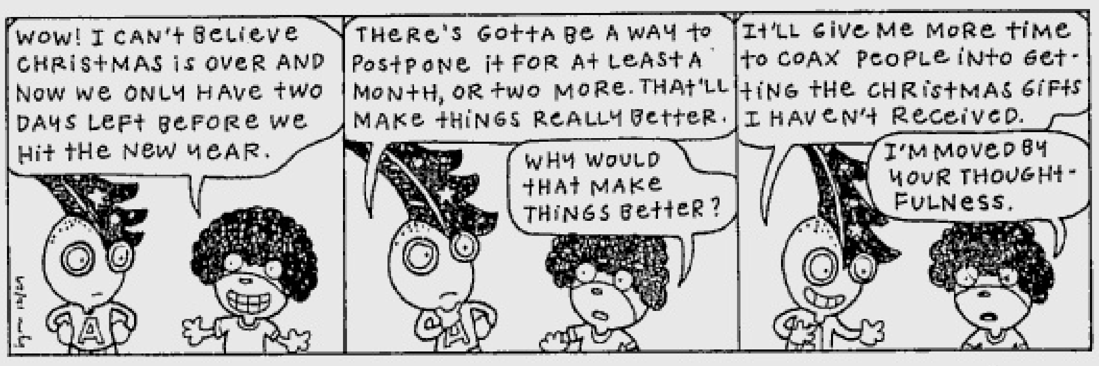
MARVIN BY TOM ARMSTRONG


LIFE SURE IS STRANGE, BERNIE. WHEN WE WERE YOUNG, WE USED TO TRY TO ACT OLDER THAN WE WERE
12-29
... AND NOW THAT WE ARE OLDER, WE TAKE A MILLION PILLS EVERY DAY SO WE CAN TRY TO ACT YOUNGER THAN WE ARE.
YEP.

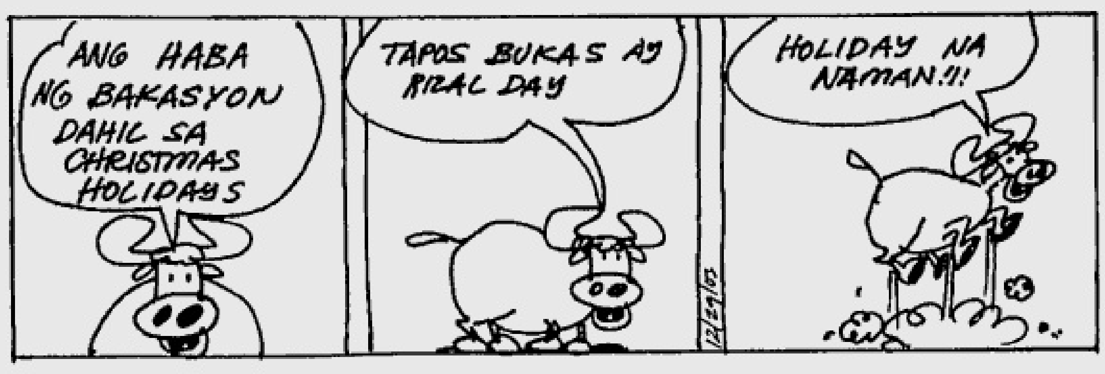
BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


YAWN!
I'M BORED.
CHRISTMAS VACATION: WEEK TWO
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

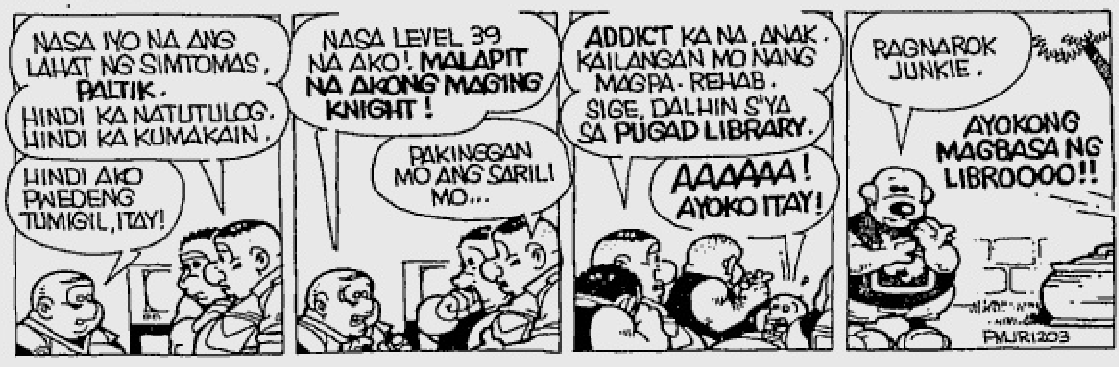
ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO


WOW! I CAN'T BELIEVE CHRISTMAS IS OVER AND NOW WE ONLY HAVE TWO DAYS LEFT BEFORE WE HIT THE NEW YEAR.
THERE'S GOTTA BE A WAY TO POSTPONE IT FOR AT LEAST A MONTH, OR TWO MORE. THAT'LL MAKE THINGS REALLY BETTER.
WHY WOULD THAT MAKE THINGS BETTER?
IT'LL GIVE ME MORE TIME TO COAX PEOPLE INTO GETTING THE CHRISTMAS GIFTS I HAVEN'T RECEIVED.
I'M MOVED BY YOUR THOUGHTFULNESS.

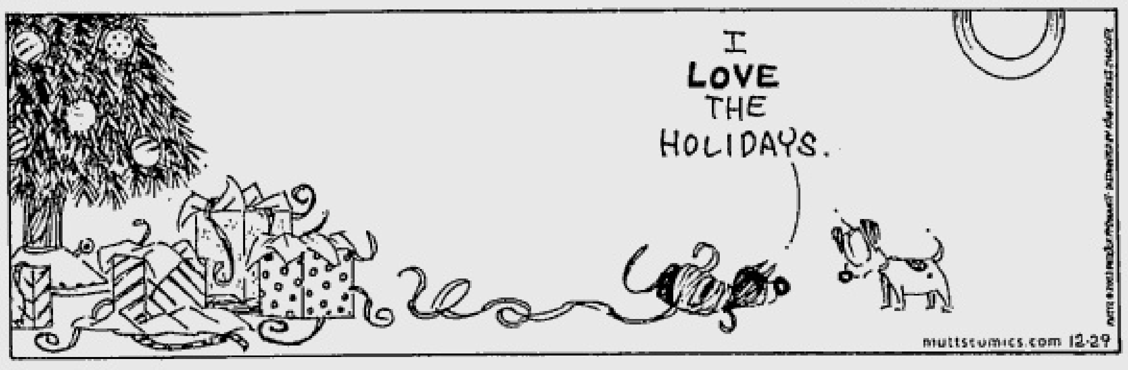
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


ANG HABA NG BAKASYON DAHIL SA CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS
TAPOS BUKAS AY RIZAL DAY
HOLIDAY NA NAMAN!!!
12/29/03

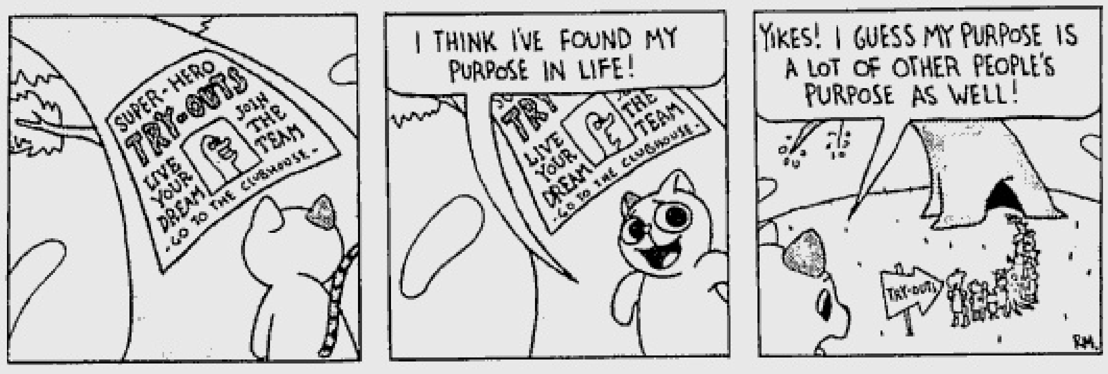
PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


NASA IYO NA ANG LAHAT NG SIMTOMAS, PALTIK.
HINDI KA NATUTULOG. HINDI KA KUMAKAIN.
HINDI AKO PWEDENG TUMIGIL, ITAY!
NASA LEVEL 39 NA AKO! MALAPIT NA AKONG MAGING KNIGHT!
PAKINGGAN MO ANG SARILI MO...
ADDICT KA NA, ANAK. KAILANGAN MO NANG MAGPA-REHAB.
SIGE, DALHIN S'YA SA PUGAD LIBRARY.
AAAAAA! AYOKO ITAY!
RAGNAROK JUNKIE.
AYOKONG MAGBASA NG LIBROOOO!!
PMJR1203

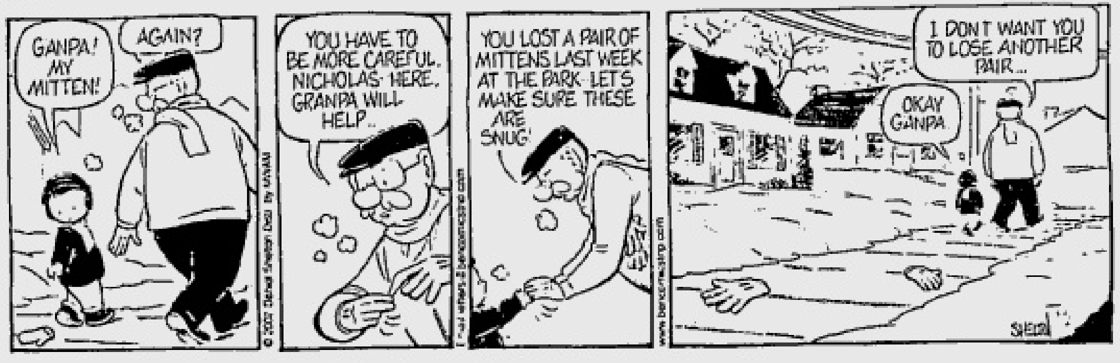
MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL


I LOVE THE HOLIDAYS.
muttscomics.com 12-29

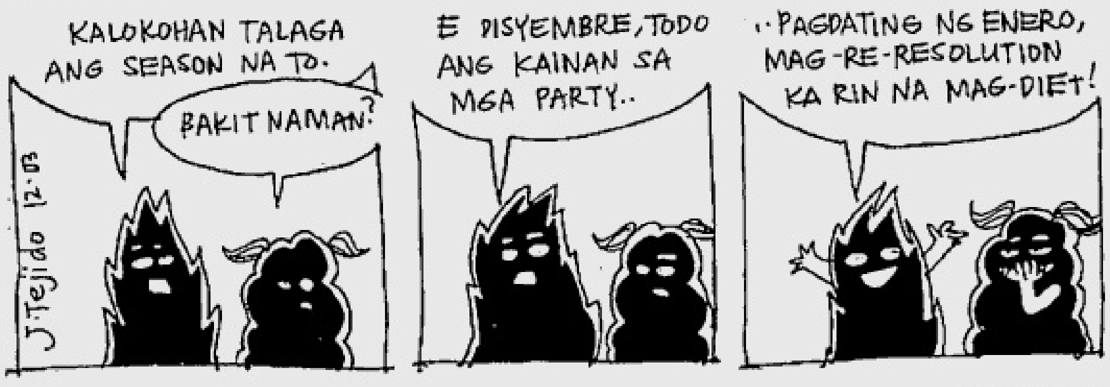
SHIRLEY'S PETS BY ROBERT MAGNUSON


SUPER-HERO TRY-OUTS
LIVE YOUR DREAM
JOIN THE TEAM
-GO TO THE CLUBHOUSE-
I THINK I'VE FOUND MY PURPOSE IN LIFE!
YIKES! I GUESS MY PURPOSE IS A LOT OF OTHER PEOPLE'S PURPOSE AS WELL!
TRY-OUTS
RM.

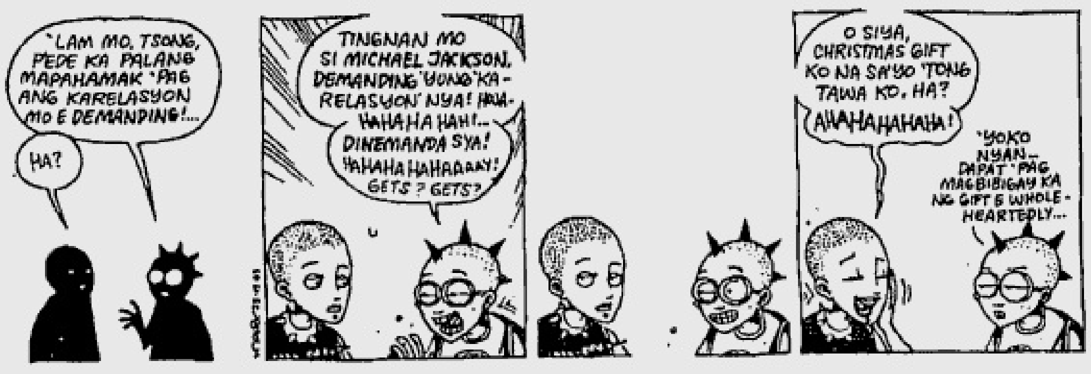
BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON


GANPA! MY MITTEN!
AGAIN?
YOU HAVE TO BE MORE CAREFUL, NICHOLAS. HERE, GRANPA WILL HELP...
YOU LOST A PAIR OF MITTENS LAST WEEK AT THE PARK. LET'S MAKE SURE THESE ARE SNUG!
I DON'T WANT YOU TO LOSE ANOTHER PAIR...
OKAY GANPA.
SHELTON

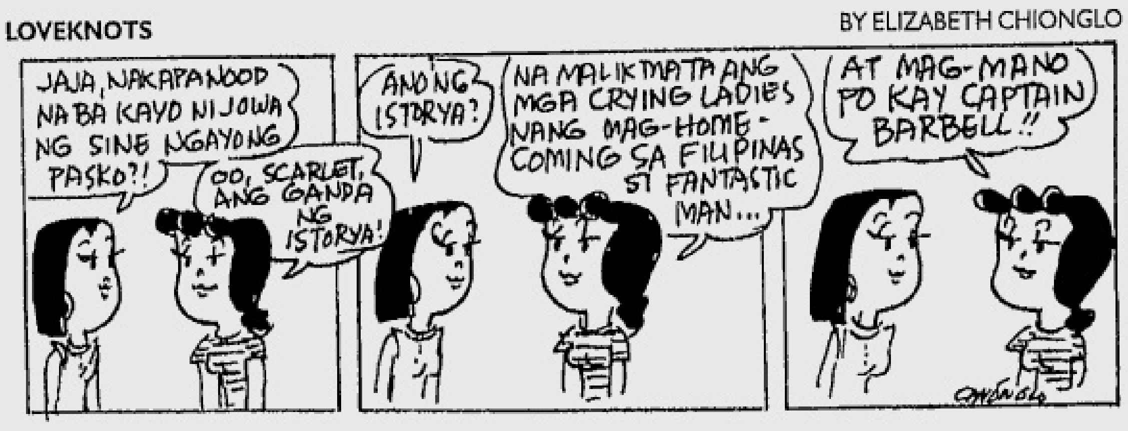
MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


KALOKOHAN TALAGA ANG SEASON NA TO.
BAKIT NAMAN?
E DISYEMBRE, TODO ANG KAINAN SA MGA PARTY..
..PAGDATING NG ENERO, MAG-RE-RESOLUTION KA RIN NA MAG-DIET!
J.Tejido 12.03

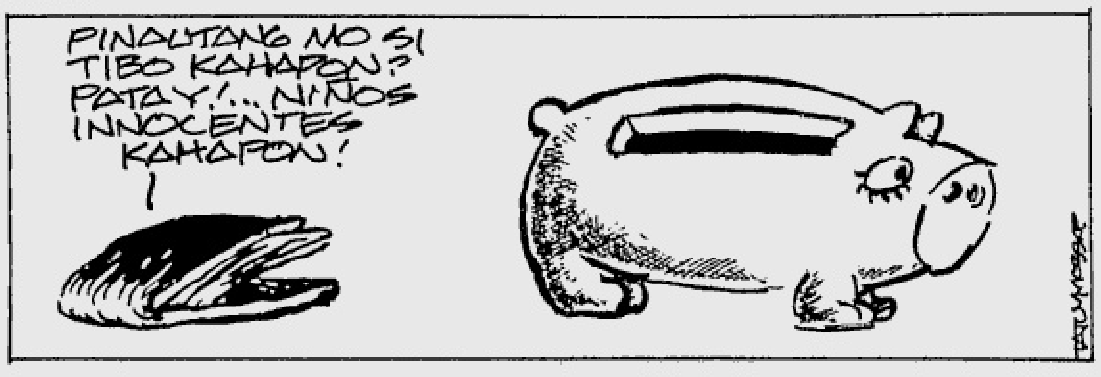
KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA


'LAM MO, TSONG, PEDE KA PALANG MAPAHAMAK 'PAG ANG KARELASYON MO E DEMANDING!...
HA?
TINGNAN MO SI MICHAEL JACKSON. DEMANDING 'YUNG KA-RELASYON NYA! HAHAHAHA HAH!... DINEMANDA SYA! HAHAHA HAHAAAAY! GETS? GETS?
O SIYA, CHRISTMAS GIFT KO NA SA'YO 'TONG TAWA KO, HA?
AHAHAHAHAHA!
'YOKO NYAN... DAPAT 'PAG MAGBIBIGAY KA NG GIFT E WHOLE-HEARTEDLY...

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


JAJA, NAKAPANOOD NA BA KAYO NI JOWA NG SINE NGAYONG PASKO?!
OO, SCARLET, ANG GANDA NG ISTORYA!
ANO'NG ISTORYA?
NA MALIKMATA ANG MGA CRYING LADIES NANG MAG-HOME-COMING SA FILIPINAS SI FANTASTIC MAN...
AT MAG-MANO PO KAY CAPTAIN BARBELL!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


PINAUTANG MO SI TIBO KAHAPON? PATAY!... NIÑOS INNOCENTES KAHAPON!
TATUM MORENO

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: No matter how serious you are privately, your exterior is breezy and friendly. You like to please others. Although you do not seek it out, you often end up running the show. You are honest and sometimes unwittingly blunt (but always well-meaning). Family means a lot to you. Partnerships and close relationships are your focus this year.
Birthdate of: Mary Tyler Moore, actress; Ted Danson, actor; Gelsey Kirkland, ballet dancer.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): If you're not aware of your actions today, you could trigger serious conflicts with others. (Be sure you know that what you want is worth fighting for.)

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Plans for travel and matters connected with publishing and education could meet with opposition today. Wait until tomorrow to really go after what you want.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Disagreement with a friend arises easily today. Think about what you're saying. Is what you want worth blowing a friendship over or offending someone?

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Tread carefully! Arguments can spring up all around you. People are looking for a fight today. (That's why this is a poor day to be pushy about what you want.)

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Expect conflicts at work in matters related to the law, publishing, higher education and dealing with foreign countries. If you have a pet project to promote, don't do it today. Wait until tomorrow.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Quarrels with others about shared assets and joint responsibilities for children or creative projects are likely today. Don't dig in your heels. Tomorrow is a better day to settle these matters.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Your home environment is very important to you. (Lighting, smells, moods and colors literally affect you.) Because of this, you might have to defend your position today.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Be extra-careful and cautious today. Accidents and setbacks related to transportation (and even walking) are possible now. Go slowly.

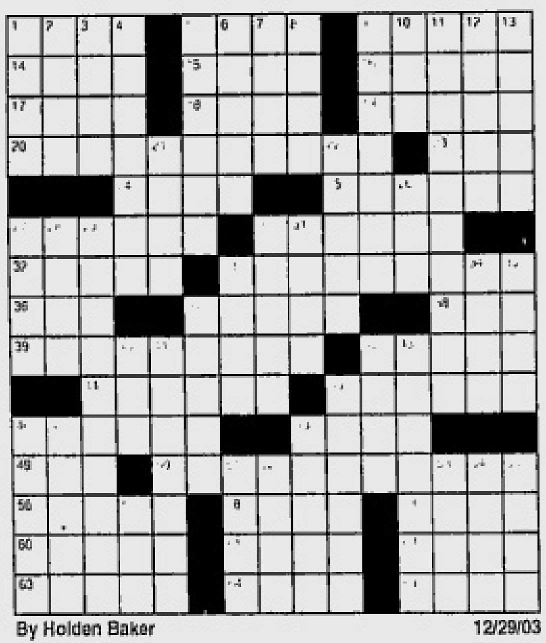
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You generally do things in a big way. (That's because Jupiter, the largest planet, is your ruler.) Today, you're tempted to throw money around. Wait until tomorrow.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Arguments with family members are likely today. But is it really important to get your way? Trying to keep the peace matters more. (Think about it.)

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Although your energy level is high today, you might be too impatient with others. Avoid unnecessary conflicts. If you think others are being too slow today, ask yourself if your expectations are realistic. (Are they?)

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Do something that requires some serious hard work today. You have a lot of pent-up energy that needs someplace to go. Physical activity will give your aggressions a satisfactory outlet.

DAILY CROSSWORD

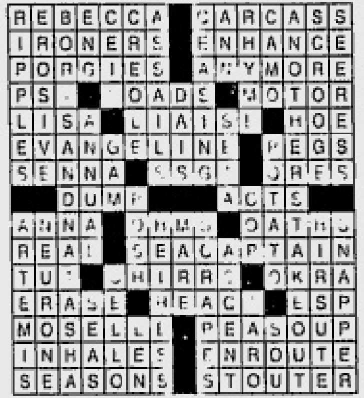


By Holden Baker
Greenfield, MA
12/29/03

ACROSS
1 Mall event
5 Big shots
9 Wyle and Gordon
14 Famous cookie maker
15 Correct text
16 "A Doll's House" playwright
17 Cloth tear
18 Capp's hyena
19 Colorful aquarium fish
20 Restored to an original state
23 General Arnold's nickname
24 Bonkers
25 Boundaries
27 Domestic flights?
30 Englishman
32 Flat-top hills
33 Lubricating tool
36 6th sense
37 Daytime TV dramas
38 Full-house letters
39 Ancient Italians
42 Record
44 Kennedy assassin
45 Woolly
46 Johnson's impeachment leader
48 Punishment stick
49 Swiss canton
50 Very simple
56 Stairway piece
58 Mature
59 "Sweeney _"
60 V-formation fliers
61 Poet Khayyam
62 Model Macpherson
63 Mormon leader
64 9-digit IDs
65 Hammerhead part

DOWN
1 FDR's mother
2 Iowa State city
3 Pine (for)
4 Neighbor of Latvia
5 African grasslands
6 Novel thoughts
7 Bowling targets
8 Laurel or Musial
9 Silly saps
10 Eng. honor
11 The way it happens
12 Location of the Great Mosque
13 Ginger cookies
21 Yours and mine
22 Inventor Howe
26 Stooge name
27 Hook's underling
28 Lab procedure
29 According to contract
30 Cattle marking
31 Workout figs.
33 Soccer score
34 "Exodus" writer
35 "And Then There Were _"
37 Wound marks
40 Branch of the mil.
41 Attester
42 Turner of Hollywood
43 Ballroom dance
45 Coats
46 Sudden onrush
47 One archangel
48 Channel of politicos
51 Greek Cupid
52 Objectives
53 Warsaw native
54 Inactive
55 "East of _"
57 Map dir.

Saturday's Puzzle Solved



(C)2003 Tribune Media Services, Inc.
All rights reserved
12/29/03

CECILE Licad with Rodel Colmenar of the Manila Philharmonic Orchestra

A STRIKING scene from Dulaang Sibol's "Kaharian ng Araw"

JUNIOR Saraza, exceptional talent

MAY Bayot, star of "Himala," with writer Ricky Lee and composer Vincent de Jesus

Best performances of 2003

From page D1

The play of the year was "The Romance of Magno Rubio," as staged by the extraordinary talents of Ma-yi Theater Company, a Fil-Am group based in the US.

Written by Lonnie Carter (with Tagalog text by Ralph Peña), the play was based on a story by Carlos Bulosan, who wrote first-hand about the plight of Pinoy workers during the Depression, when "No Dogs and Filipinos Allowed" signs could be seen in California.

The durable Gantimpala Theater Foundation of Tony Espejo unveiled its laboratory arm at the St. Cecilia's Hall of St. Scholastica's College. It proved a successful bid to attract a more mature—"and less noisy" (as Espejo put it)—audience.

The plays included "Café Vittorio," a marital drama; "Despedida de Soltera," a feminist comedy; and "La Ronde," another adult drama set during the Victorian era.

Bahaghari's "Late Nite Catechism," at the RCBC Plaza Theater was lots of fun, in a charmingly Catholic sort of way. Zeneida Amador was in her element, in fact at her best, as the nun, wise-cracking, ad libbing and answering questions from the "class" (the audience).

There was one quip which was uncalled for, however, when Amador created an imaginary scenario about a hit-and-run victim being robbed—"Only in the Philippines."

The Ateneo de Manila High School Department inaugurated its Tanghalang Onofre Pagsanghan in honor of the legendary director, who is still active at 76.

This is now the home of the acclaimed Dulaang Sibol which Pagsanghan founded. Here, the high school members are taught to act, analyze, direct themselves, and create their own music and costumes. The key words are innovation and creativity, which lead to character formation.

The inaugural presentation was "Kaharian ng Araw," written by "Mr. Pagsi" and his son Joel, a dark drama with music about greed coming to grief (as in nada or nothing).

The major dance companies—Ballet Philippines (BP), Philippine Ballet Theater (PBT) and Ballet Manila (BM)—came up with dazzling productions which sent balletomanes cheering.

"Darna" by Ballet Philippines was clever, campy, entertaining, with impressive flying scenes. Philippine Ballet Theater's "The Hunchback of Notre Dame," which had its Asian premier, was even better than PBT's "The Merry Widow" last year. And BP and Ballet Manila mounted their own versions of "The Nutcracker."

Students accompanied by parents and teachers flocked to the large Aliw and Star Theaters at the CCP Complex to applaud ballerina Lisa Macuja, principal danseur Osias Barroso, the soloists and corps de ballet of BM in "Swan Lake" and "The Nutcracker," and were rewarded with breathtaking lifts and leaps.

The year ended fittingly with the Ramon Obusan Folkloric Group's "Vamos a Belen" at the CCP, a joyous cavalcade of dances from the different regions.

The performing arts scene remained vibrant and innovative as ever

LIZA Macuja in "The Nutcracker"

SCENES from Philippine Ballet Theater's "The Hunchback of Notre Dame"

Ocean Adventure gears up for the holidays with new shows and new attractions

Loveable sea lion wows the crowd

The world's only Whale Encounter Program

SUBIC-People weary of the rush are taking a nature break at Ocean Adventure.

At Southeast Asia's only open water marine park, the family can have a fun day enjoying the simple beauty and wonder of the ocean world.

From December 26 to 30, the Park will have special evening shows featuring its awesome attractions, the pseudorcas and sea lions. During these days, the Park will be open from 9 am to 9pm to accommodate its many holiday visitors.

Aside from the shows, guests can experience the whales up close at the world's only Whale Encounter Programs designed for all ages; it includes diving, swimming or wading with the whales.

The Park also boasts of the Discovery Aquarium; it houses thousands of species of fresh and seawater fish including the beautiful but deadly lion fish, one of the most poisonous fish found in Philippine waters.

Guests can enjoy great food while enjoying the breathtaking view of Ilanin Bay at the Ilanin Bay Café. Souvenirs, gift items and other great bargains are sold at Ocean Treasures gift shop.

Ocean Adventure tickets are sold at Ticket World outlets, its Manila Sales office at Unit 4C, Pearl Plaza, 8101 Pearl Drive, Pasig, tel.6334185 /638 8985 or Subic office telephone (047)2529000.

Dining Facilities
Whale Shows
Discovery Aquarium
Meet our Mascots !
Sea Lion Shows
Wade with our whales!
Ocean Adventure
CAMAYAN

Special Holiday Evening Shows starting Dec 26-30 Park open 9am to 9pm!

Bundle up and have a merry merry time !

Whale and Sea Lion Shows daily ! Open 9am - 6pm

The Adventure of a Lifetime !

Tickets available at all TicketWorld outlets and our Manila Sales office at Unit 4C, Pearl Plaza, 8101 Pearl Drive, Pasig City • Tel. 633 4185 and 638 8985. Or call our Subic office at tel. (047) 252 9000. Visit our website at www.oceanadventure.com.ph

Also visit Camayan Beach Resort - the adventure-packed getaway, just 2 minutes from Ocean Adventure. For more information, call (047) 252 8000.

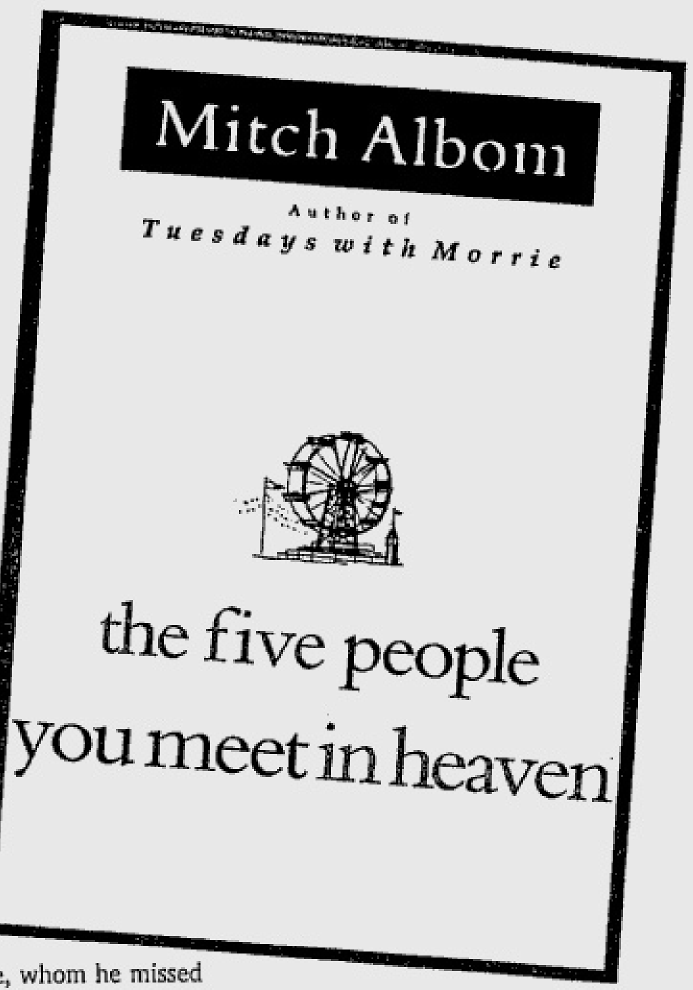
EXPERIENCE
FESTIVAL SUPERMALL
FILINVEST-ALABANG
YEAR END SALE
UP TO 75% OFF ON SELECTED ITEMS!
IN OVER 555 STORES!
Dec. 26 - 31, 2003
Call Customer Service at 850-3514
www.festivalsupermall.com
DTI-NCR Permit A2-523 series of 2003

Sentimental 'Heaven'

"The Five People You Meet in Heaven"
By Mitch Albom
Hyperion, New York,
2003, 196 pages

By Ruel S. De Vera

The first novel from the author of 'Tuesdays with Morrie' is a compact, unabashedly melodramatic tale of an inspired little life



BECAUSE the story of Morrie Schwartz's last days with a former student seems so dramatic and yet profound at the same time, it is easy to forget that "Tuesdays with Morrie," Mitch Albom's best-selling 1997 book, is a true story. In fact, Albom, a columnist for the Detroit Free Press, notably also wrote "Fab Five," a sharp take on the Chris Webber-led University of Michigan hoops team that almost won it all in the early 1990s, as well as five other books, all of them non-fiction.

Now, Albom takes on a new challenge—his first novel.

This novel, "The Five People You Meet in Heaven," is meant in some ways to be follow-up to "Tuesdays." Like "Tuesdays," "Heaven" is compact and spare, the sportswriter in Albom allowing him to tell his tale tastefully and with brevity. But it is a decidedly different tale from his previous seven books.

"Heaven" begins with an ending. Eddie is 83, a solitary maintenance worker at a Ruby Pier, an amusement park that has clearly seen better days. The park prefigures Eddie, dubbed "Eddie Maintenance" because that's what it says on his name patch. All these years, Eddie has labored to keep these fun machines safe for children. But an accident, unpreventable, unforeseeable, takes his life, and just like that, Eddie is in Heaven.

Or is he? At first, Eddie cannot understand what's happening to him except for two things: "Where is my worry," he asks. "Where is my pain?" Thus begins Eddie's initiation in Albom's vision of Heaven.

Essentially, Eddie must meet and talk to five people, some of whom he knows, others he does not, but all connected to him somehow, before he can move on. Everyone who takes this path goes through this.

Each person takes Eddie back to a part of his life, a long but, in his weary eyes, unremarkable and wasted life. Each person reveals something to Eddie that the wizened maintenance man did not know and slowly the pieces of his life begin to fit.

Not happy

It is not all happy. Some of the things that Eddie finds out almost break him. There are discoveries that stretch all the way back to his childhood, a period of time dominated by his hardworking but stoic father. It takes him to the field of war, in the Philippines, where he stood side by side with fellow soldiers and witnessed death, courage and found himself changed forever.

It takes him back to his beloved, much-lamented wife Marguerite, whom he missed to the very end of his days. And it will take him to all that happened around him, the things he was a part of but never knew.

"Heaven" feels like a sequel to "Tuesdays" in that, while "Tuesdays" was about the wise words of a dying man, "Heaven" is what Albom sees as what happens immediately after one's death.

Additionally, it feels like "Heaven" is the embodiment, the fictional dramatization of the advice handed out by the late Morrie. Thus "Heaven" is about appreciating the little, unseen things in life. It's about the satisfaction in a quiet life, the acceptance of what people are meant to do, even if it feels like a disappointment, a step down from one's dreams.

In that sense, "Heaven" is very much a book of inspiration as the story is so short and straightforward, most of the suspense and mystery is held in finding out who these five people Eddie is supposed to meet, and why he must meet them. Beyond that, it's a by-the-numbers story of looking back at one's life with opened eyes.

But Albom handles it all with good if Spartan language and an unabashed sense of sentimentality. Yes, he knows it's all so weepy and yes, he knows it's all so life-affirming. But that's exactly the point.

No darkness

Despite some tragedies, there is no darkness in this book. In fact, there's very little by way of ambiguity here. There isn't a lot of complexity or twists by way of surprises in "Heaven." Many readers will easily be able to guess whether or not Eddie manages to save the life of that little girl at the moment of his death. Even the final gambit, a final Hail Mary of a heart-tugger, could be seen coming.

"Heaven" can't even be considered a religious book. Instead, Albom takes what worked in "Tuesdays" and expands on them, using the life lessons as a base to build his narrative on. It may be a book of fiction instead of a real-life chronicle, but "Heaven" feels like a natural next step after "Tuesdays" and Albom conducts the book's events as such.

There may be some people who find this tale overly simplistic or perhaps a tad too saccharine, but "Heaven" works because of an economy of writing: Albom knows exactly what he wants to do and then sets out to do just that, no more, no less.

This book is not the powerful, affecting tome that "Tuesdays" was; it is fictional and much more obvious. But in its own way, "Heaven" wears its bleeding heart on its book jackets and Albom tells a controlled, inspiring yarn about the redemption and final reward of an ordinary man after an ordinary life, about what's supposed to be important in this short life.

Because, in the end, Eddie may feel like a fictional takeoff on Morrie, but essentially he is just one of us. Mitch Albom still has words of wisdom to share and, for all those readers who were moved by "Tuesdays with Morrie" and perhaps even tracked down significant mentors of their own after all these years, "The Five People You Meet in Heaven" makes sense, inspires and moves, all with a grand dollop of sentimentality, but without any apologies, and apparently, without any fear.

Available in hardcover at National Bookstore and Power Books.

Unique children's book on Christmas trimmings and arts and craft

THE CHILDREN'S book "Search For Christmas Tree Trims" has been released.

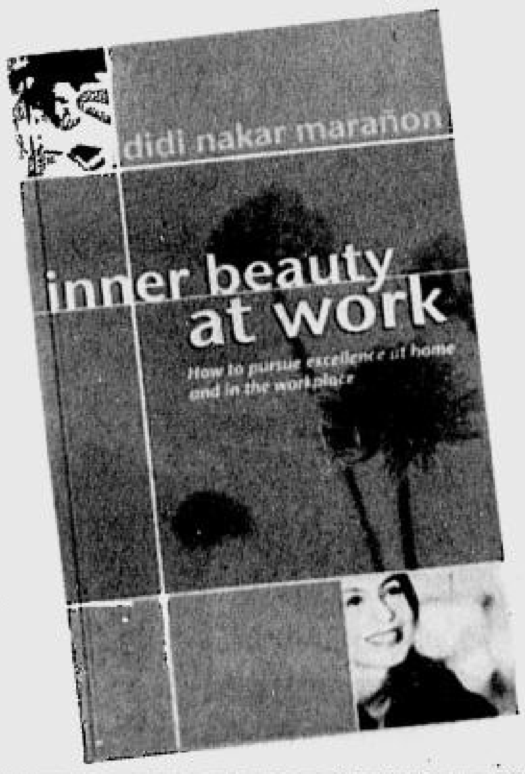
According to author Mila Royeca Evangelista, of the Royeca clan of General Santos City, the book is an "extraordinary fairy tale that fires the child's fantasy, imagination and creativity." It is about the adventures of Myra as she travels in search of Christmas tree ornaments.

The last 10 pages of the 112-page book focus on craft making where the family can have fun together making Christmas tree ornaments.

Evangelista is a former magazine publisher. She is also a designer of yarn craft, producer and designer of corn husk craft and a portrait and landscape painter in oil. She has received an award from the Philippine Soroptimist International Club for her Women Helping Women Program. She is a member of the Arts and Craft Club Phils., General Santos Trade House Association and Corn Husk Club.

Call 9317269 or fax 9310170

Book on inner beauty released



"YOU'RE a woman on the go. With lots of work to do. Plans to set. Deadlines to meet. Chores to finish. Dreams to pursue. Are you satisfied with how you've been handling things?" These lines can stop any busy woman like you and make you think.

In "Inner Beauty at Work," author Didi Nakar Maranon shows how you can pursue excellence at home or at work.

The author takes you through some of her life's journeys and shares biblical perspectives she has learned along the way.

"Inner Beauty at Work" is the sequel to Inner Beauty. It is available in Catholic bookstores, National Book Store and Springs Bookstore.

Call 7226749 or 0918-4427446.

Musings of an Old Soldier
PMA Class 28

AFP's oldest retired general launches book

THE BOOK, "Musings of an Old Soldier," by General Leoncio S. Tan (Ret.) was launched last Saturday, Dec. 27, at the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club, Mandaluyong City.

Edited by Eleanor V. Guanio-Bartels and published by Impaq Ventures Corporation, the book is a compilation of Tan's essays, articles and letters during his 30-year military career.

At 99, Tan, a member of Class 1928 of the Philippine Military Academy, is the oldest surviving retired general of the Philippines.

Tan was commanding general of the Philippine Army from 1957 to 1958. A lawyer, he was also a director of the National Bureau of Investigation at one time after his retirement from the military.